



meeting **COUNTY COUNCIL**

date **17 JUNE 2004**

agenda item number

**10**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL,  
THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE CABINET MEMBER  
FOR FINANCE & PROPERTY**

**A52 MULTI-MODAL STUDY – RESPONSE TO EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL  
ASSEMBLY**

**Purpose of report**

1. To advise Members of the final recommendations of the A52 Multi-Modal Study, and to seek approval of a response to the East Midlands Regional Assembly in respect of consultation on these recommendations.

**Background**

2. As part of the Government's programme of Multi-Modal Studies, the Government Office for the East Midlands commissioned consultants to undertake the A52 (Bingham to Clifton Bridge) Multi-Modal Study (MMS). The study commenced in September 2002, and the emerging strategy recommendations were considered by the Council at the meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2003.
3. The consultants published their Final Report on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2004. The Report is now out for consultation prior to the East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) compiling a "regional view" to send to the Secretary of State for Transport to be agreed by the meeting of the Assembly's Regional Planning Board on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2004. This report is seeking approval of a response to the EMRA.
4. In addition, the 'Examination-in-Public' for the Joint Structure Plan (JSP) is scheduled to commence on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2004. Some of the elements of the A52 MMS recommendations have significant implications for the JSP. Such matters are addressed, as appropriate, within this report.
5. The recommendations of the A52 MMS have been considered by the Joint (County/City) Committee on Strategic Planning & Transport at its meetings of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2004 and 21<sup>st</sup> May 2004. The views of the Joint Committee are also reflected, as appropriate, within this report.

## **The recommended strategy**

6. The consultants indicate that – “The recommended strategy covers a wide range of measures, which address all modes of transport, covering extensive measures for walking and cycling through to bus measures, and strategic highway proposals for dualling the A52 and provision of a New River Crossing. The measures are geographically distributed throughout the study area, and have been packaged so that they are capable of phased implementation. The shorter term measures are capable of being implemented quickly, to allow the study to generate a series of ‘quick wins’, which in turn generate a momentum for the implementation of the remainder of the strategy.” (A list of the recommended strategy measures, with approximate cost, and an indication of the first year by which the scheme is likely to have been implemented, is attached as Appendix A to this report.)
7. The report to the Joint Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2004 expressed concern that the MMS Report does not provide sufficient information on the potential economic/regeneration impacts, particularly associated with a New River Crossing. Accordingly, the two Councils commissioned an urgent economic development/regeneration study. The findings of the study are reflected, as appropriate, within this report.

## **Part A: TRANSPORTATION COMMENTS**

### **Proposals with significant joint implications**

#### A52 Improvements

8. The MMS recommends the provision of a grade-separated dual carriageway over the complete length of the A52 route between Clifton Bridge and Bingham at an estimated total cost of £146 million. Combined with the programmed dualling of the A46 (Newark to Widmerpool), this will result in a significant upgrading of the core trunk road network in the eastern sector of Greater Nottingham. It will also significantly reduce traffic along the A612 corridor, and provide limited relief to routes through West Bridgford and across the Trent/Lady Bay Bridges into the City. The proposed improvements of the A52 are supported in principle by the two authorities.
9. However, although off-line dualling to the south of Radcliffe is recommended, the line is left for the Highways Agency to determine in the future. The consultants have indicated that the alignment for this section of dual carriageway falls outside the scope of the MMS, which brings into question the deliverability of the scheme. Provision of a dual carriageway between Clifton Bridge and Bingham is a fundamental element of the package of proposals and, therefore, it is considered that the necessary work by the Highways Agency to confirm an alignment should be undertaken as a matter of urgency. Consequently, it is recommended that the Regional Assembly be requested to include such sentiments in the regional view to be submitted to the Secretary of State.

## New River Crossing

10. The most contentious proposal included in the recommendations is the inclusion of a New River Crossing as a longer-term measure. At present congestion occurs on all the main approaches to Trent/Lady Bay Bridges. This congestion affects all traffic, including buses and commercial vehicles, and also results in traffic diverting onto unsuitable residential roads. Part of the problem arises because of a lack of a direct connection between areas to the south of the river and the north-east sector of the conurbation, which increases traffic on routes through the City and West Bridgford. The study estimates that there are currently 9,400 trips crossing the river northbound in the am peak, which is expected to rise by 17% by 2016. As a result, even with a significant increase in the use of public transport, there is expected to be an increase in vehicular trips wishing to cross the river.
11. The MMS study, therefore, demonstrates an analytical justification for a New River Crossing, but there is also the important question of transport strategy. The conclusion of the study is that extensive public transport priority cannot be introduced across the Trent without causing severe additional traffic congestion. For the longer term the MMS concludes that provision of a New River Crossing would remove unnecessary traffic from the existing bridges and allow effective bus priority measures to be introduced across the existing Trent Bridge and on its approaches. However, the MMS indicates that it is important to directly link such bus priority and the provision of a new crossing so that extra road space is 'locked-in' for bus measures only and not provide an overall increase in traffic capacity.
12. Consequently, it is concluded that overall, in terms of both trip capacity and transport strategy, there is a case for a New River Crossing.
13. The MMS examined two possible locations for a new crossing – the existing safeguarded route for a 'Gamston' bridge and a new location, a 'Radcliffe' bridge, to the west of Radcliffe-on-Trent. These options were judged against transport effects, the Government's five main criteria for transport (safety, accessibility, economy, environment and integration) and public acceptability.
14. With regard to transport effects (see attached Appendix B), safety, economy, integration and public acceptability criteria, there is little to choose between the options. However, the MMS concluded that a Radcliffe bridge would have relatively lower environmental impacts than a Gamston bridge.
15. In respect of accessibility, the MMS looked at two aspects. Using a strict interpretation of the Government's accessibility criterion, it was concluded that there is little to choose between the two bridge options. However, the MMS also looked at broad economic development/regeneration impacts of linking the north-east of the conurbation to areas to the south of the river. In this context, the MMS favoured a Radcliffe bridge, but there was not sufficient detail to identify specific impacts and, therefore, as referred to in paragraph 7 above, the two Councils commissioned an economic development/regeneration study.

16. The MMS concluded that, although either location for a bridge can be justified, the preferred location is at Radcliffe, mainly because of its lower environmental impact and providing better accessibility to the north-eastern sector of the conurbation. As a result, the MMS has recommended the provision of a Radcliffe bridge, at an estimated cost of £102m, as an integral part of a package of measures.
17. The City Council supports the conclusions of the consultants and endorses the proposal for a New River Crossing to be located at Radcliffe.
18. From a County Council viewpoint, the study's conclusion that there is a need for a New River Crossing is welcomed. However, although there appears to be a case for promoting a Radcliffe bridge there are some unanswered questions about its deliverability. Environmental impact is a key factor in the consultants' decision to prefer a Radcliffe bridge, but, although this may ultimately prove to be so, it is based on the consultants' opinion only and is not borne out by analysis within the study. Junction arrangements are also unclear. At Colwick Loop Road, the access road for the new bridge may have to go through the petrol storage depot, but the level of detail of the MMS is not sufficient to give any guarantees that such an arrangement can be achieved. There has also been no serious consideration given to junction arrangements with the A52, including the, so far, undefined Radcliffe bypass. Consequently, the County Council considers that further work in respect of deliverability is necessary before a positive decision to locate a new bridge at Radcliffe could be made.

#### Behavioural change

19. An ambitious package of behavioural change measures focused on increasing travel planning in schools, travel planning in the workplace and personalised travel planning is included in the recommendations. This is a rapidly growing transport activity area and the MMS Report recognises the exemplary work already achieved in Greater Nottingham in this field. A five-year investment programme to boost current activity levels is recommended, which the two authorities support.

#### Walking and cycling

20. An additional non-car mode river crossing in the vicinity of the Waterside Regeneration Zone is included in the walking and cycling recommended package, the inclusion of which is supported in principle by both authorities.

#### Bus measures

21. A package of quality bus measures comprising bus priorities and stop improvements are recommended for routes within the study area. This includes further bus lanes and queue relocation on radial routes through West Bridgford and in the longer term on Trent Bridge (in association with a New River Crossing) and on the A612. Both authorities support the measures, to be delivered through the Bus Quality Partnership approach.

22. The MMS confirms support for provision of a bus-based Park & Ride scheme at Gamston as currently proposed in the Greater Nottingham Local Transport Plan. This support is welcomed by both authorities.

### Rail

23. The proposal to extend the Robin Hood Line half hourly service east from Nottingham to Bingham (via Netherfield and Radcliffe on Trent), is strongly supported and offers significant benefits in terms of increased rail use for travel to work journeys. In addition, the longer-term aim of developing a new rail based park and ride “parkway” station at Saxondale, (near the A46/A52 interchange), is also welcomed. These proposals are consistent with those contained in the ARUP South Notts Rail Study, which reported in July 2003. It is considered that both local authorities should recommend the Regional Assembly to press the Strategic Rail Authority for early implementation of these proposals.

### **Response to EMRA**

24. Apart from the findings of the economic development/regeneration study, paragraphs 8 - 23 above represent the views of the Joint Committee, and the Joint Committee recommends that they be taken into account by the two authorities in determining a response to EMRA in respect of consultation on the recommendations of the A52 Multi-Modal Study.

### **Future delivery**

25. The total cost of the strategy is estimated to be in the region of £300 million. The consultant’s economic cost/benefit appraisal shows significant positive benefits and a good return on investment. Subsequent delivery of the programme will require each of the individual elements to be taken forward by the relevant delivery agencies. Delivery of trunk roads is the responsibility of the Highways Agency, extending the Robin Hood Line will require the co-operation of the Strategic Rail Authority and the local train operating company (currently Central Trains). All local transport schemes, including a New River Crossing, will need to be taken forward by the local authorities through the Local Transport Plan.

### **Joint Structure Plan issues**

#### Arno Vale Road Link Road

26. The Draft JSP refers to the major A6211 Arno Vale Road Link Road scheme being subject to the outcome of the A52 MMS. The Draft JSP states – “If the A52 MMS does not positively support the Link Road, it is proposed to abandon the scheme because it would create additional road capacity not compatible with a modern transport strategy.”
27. The MMS has shown that provision of the proposed Link Road does not increase traffic at the western end of Arno Vale Road in the vicinity of the A60 Mansfield Road and, therefore, traffic using the Link Road will simply be a redistribution of local traffic. Consequently, it has no strategic benefit and has not been included

as part of the preferred strategy of the MMS. As a result, It is recommended that the Arno Vale Road Link Road scheme be abandoned and deleted from JSP. This would need to be formally agreed with the City Council and would form part of the Proposed Modifications to the JSP (see paragraph 32).

### New River Crossing

28. With regard to the JSP there are two questions for which answers will be expected at the forthcoming 'Examination-in-Public'. Firstly, is a New River Crossing required? Secondly, if so, what provision should the JSP make?
29. Although, there is considered to be a case for a New River Crossing, if it were provided in isolation, outside a package including A52 dualling and priority for public transport on Trent Bridge, there would be an overall increase of capacity for vehicular traffic. This would be contrary to transport policy for the Greater Nottingham area. Consequently, it should be emphasised that any provision for a New River Crossing in the JSP must stipulate "after A52 dualling and accompanied by a comparable reduction of vehicular capacity on Trent Bridge". As such, it is not envisaged that a new bridge would be constructed until the latter part of 2011-2016 at the earliest.
30. With regard to safeguarding for a New River Crossing, the Draft JSP states that both authorities "will give close consideration to the (MMS) Consultants' recommendations regarding a further Trent Crossing and the A52 east and make alterations to the Plan accordingly". This is still the case. Additional feasibility work on the deliverability of the Radcliffe crossing, at a level of detail beyond that of a MMS, will be undertaken by both authorities. A conclusion to this work will inform the modifications stage of the JSP. Until then, the current safeguarding of land for a New River Crossing will continue under existing adopted Plans.

### **Submission of evidence for the JSP**

31. Paragraphs 26 - 30 above represent the views of the Joint Committee, and the Joint Committee recommends that they be taken into account by both authorities in determining evidence to be given at the forthcoming 'Examination-in-Public' for the Joint Structure Plan.

### **Part B: STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMENTS**

32. The implications for the JSP are set out in the body of this report. The independent Panel, chairing the Examination-in-Public in the period 22<sup>nd</sup> June - 9<sup>th</sup> July, will be informed of the views of the County/City Councils on the A52 Study and its implications for the Draft JSP. The Panel will present a report to the two Councils on their findings with recommendations to modify or maintain the Draft JSP in the early autumn. Following this, the two Councils will be preparing Proposed Modifications to the Draft JSP that will involve the Joint Committee, Cabinet and Full Council.
33. The proposed Radcliffe-on-Trent Bypass and the New River Crossing alignments will involve development in the Green Belt. The Green Belt implications of the

Gamston option has been assessed from past analysis but that for the proposed Radcliffe-on-Trent Bypass and the Radcliffe bridge option has not been undertaken and cannot realistically be undertaken until more details are known as to the alignment and the structures required. The Green Belt is a strategic planning instrument and adverse impacts upon the Green Belt need to be carefully assessed. This assessment may require the consideration of revised alignments and/or mitigation measures to protect the character of the Green Belt. Emphasis is made that this Green Belt analysis is distinct and separate from environmental appraisal.

34. The results of the economic development/regeneration study were not available at the time of the drafting of this report. These will be reported at the meeting.

### **Part C: COMMENTS OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL AS LANDOWNER**

35. The uncertainty of the route for a bypass to the south of Radcliffe-on-Trent has implications for the County Council as landowner. The Council continues to hold property in this area which is incurring unavoidable maintenance costs. Consequently, the recommendation for urgent confirmation of the alignment of the new road to the south of Radcliffe-on-Trent is strongly supported.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

36. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of Finance, Equal Opportunities, Personnel, Crime and Disorder (Community Safety), the Local Member and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been brought out in the text of the report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

37. It is RECOMMENDED that the Council accept the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Strategic Planning & Transport, and approve this report:-
- (a) As a formal response of the authority to the East Midlands Regional Assembly in respect of consultation on the recommendations of the A52 Multi-Modal Study.
  - (b) As the formal position of the authority in respect of the Arno Vale Road Link Road and a New River Crossing in determining evidence for the 'Examination-in-Public' for the Joint Structure Plan.

COUNCILLOR MICK WARNER  
Leader of the County Council

COUNCILLOR TERRY BUTLER  
Cabinet Member for Environment

COUNCILLOR JOHN CARTER  
Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

### **Director of Resources' Financial Comments**

The A52 Multi-Modal Study has been funded by the DTLR and any future proposed integrated transport measures and/or road/rail developments would be either directly Government funded or would be included in future LTP bids/settlements. [KRP 3.6.04]

### **Head of Democratic and Legal Services' Comments**

Article 4 of the County Council Constitution reserves to Full Council responsibility for the policy framework of the Joint Structure Plan and the Local Transport Plan, both of which are directly affected by the recommendations of the consultants as discussed in this report. [SHB 3.6.04]

### **Background Papers Available for Inspection**

A52 Clifton Bridge to Bingham Multi-Modal Study – Final Report (March2004)

### **Electoral Divisions Affected**

All

EPS.SR/EP4539  
3 June 2004



**APPENDIX A****RECOMMENDED STRATEGY MEASURES**

Proposed Measure	Approximate Cost (£m)	Likely date by which scheme implemented
<u>Short Term (Up to 2006)</u>		
Behavioural Change Measures	9.0	2006
Walking/Cycling Infrastructure	5.0	2006
Bus Priority Measures	5.0	2006
Village/Town Centre Improvements	3.0	2006
Freight Management Measures	0.1	2006
Gamston Park & Ride (bus-based)	3.0	2006
Sub-total for short term	25.1	--
<u>Longer Term (2007-2016)</u>		
Robin Hood Services extended to Bingham	8.0	2011
Saxondale Park & Ride (rail-based)	3.0	2011
A52 Dualling Saxondale to Radcliffe	39.0	2016
A52 Radcliffe to Gamston Improvements	21.0	2016
A52 Dualling Lings Bar Road (Gamston Rdbt to Wheatcrofts Rdbt)	6.0	2016
Grade Separation of Nottingham Knight Roundabout	26.5	2016
Grade Separation of Wheatcrofts Roundabout	26.5	2016
Grade Separation of Gamston Roundabout	27.0	2016
Gedling Relief Road	13.0	2011
New River Crossing at Radcliffe	102.0	2016
Sub-total for longer term	272.0	--
Total for recommended strategy measures	297.1	--

**APPENDIX B**

Road Link	Existing	A52 Dualling @2016	A52 Dualling + Gamston Br. @2016	A52 Dualling + Radcliffe Br. @2016
A52 Radcliffe to Gamston [westbound]	1828	2374	2447	2186
Radcliffe Road (Gam - Lady Bay) [westbound]	1839	1724	1497	1352
Radcliffe Road (Lady Bay – Tr Br) [westbound]	1324	1349	1235	1217
Trent Bridge [northbound]	3088	2916	2452	2594
Lady Bay Br [northbound]	1238	1258	1102	1149
Daleside Road [inbound]	1428	1273	1511	1286
Daleside Road E. [inbound]	1260	914	1345	989
Colwick Loop Rd (E of Rad. Bridge) [inbound]	776	769	1319	1586
A612 thro Burton Joyce [inbound]	1138	666	790	693
Gunthorpe Bridge [northbound] [southbound]	909 1001	648 1186	443 984	314 866
Clifton Bridge [northbound]	5460	5800	5592	5622
Gamston Bridge [northbound]	--	--	1526	--
Radcliffe Bridge [northbound]	--	--	--	1463

Comparison of AM Peak Hour Flows (vehicles)**TABLE 1**

Road Link	Existing	A52 Dualling @2016	A52 Dualling + Gamston Br. @2016	A52 Dualling + Radcliffe Br. @2016
Daleside Road [inbound]	1428	1273	1511	1286
Trent Bridge [northbound]	3088	2916	2452	2594
Lady Bay Bridge [northbound]	1238	1258	1102	1149
Total	5754	5447	5065	5029

Comparison of AM Peak Hour Flows (vehicles) Towards the City Centre

**TABLE 2**

	Inbound	Outbound
A52 Dualling @ 2016	15,650	11,760
A52 Dualling + Gamston Bridge @2016	15,610	11,780
A52 Dualling + Radcliffe Bridge @ 2016	15,520	11,590

Comparison of AM Peak Hour Flows (vehicles) across the City Centre Cordon

**TABLE 3**