

Strategic Transport Forum

25th January 2019

Agenda Item Number 5a: Milton Keynes – Cambridge Connectivity

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Forum:

- a) Endorses the proposal to develop the Forum's understanding of connectivity between Milton Keynes and Cambridge**
- b) Agrees to proceed with the recommended programme of work to develop the required evidence base.**

1. Context

- 1.1. In order to inform the Transport Strategy and EEH longer term investment programme, Forum members will be aware of the need to develop a deeper evidence-based understanding of both the challenges and opportunities relating to connectivity that exist for all areas of the Heartland.
- 1.2. Forum members will be aware that England's Economic Heartland has been commissioned by Government to take forward work on a connectivity study associated with the section of the expressway between Oxford and Milton Keynes.
- 1.3. Work on that study is being taken forward in partnership with local transport and planning authorities, as well as with local enterprise partnerships. It will ensure that the Forum, and local partners, will have a much firmer view of the connectivity challenges and opportunities in that area of the Heartland. This will in turn form the basis for identifying future investment requirements.
- 1.4. This paper proposes that the approach underpinning that study should be applied elsewhere in the Heartland: specifically the area east of the M1 – that between Milton Keynes and Cambridge. While this area already includes a commitment to deliver improvements to the eastern part of the Expressway (notably A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet), the work proposed is much broader – providing the opportunity to explore and understand current and future connectivity in this part of the Heartland.
- 1.5. As part of this approach there would be a need to also consider wider linkages to the east of Cambridgeshire and also to the north-west.
- 1.6. The output of the proposed study would inform the Forum's consideration of future investment requirements and priorities, taking into account existing and planned investments, as well as contributing to considerations of future development opportunities.

2. Next Steps

- 2.1. The Forum's support for taking forward this study is being sought.

- 2.2. On the assumption that the Forum supports the proposal the EEH Business Unit will work with local partners (the Mayoral Combined Authority, local transport authorities, local planning authorities, and local enterprise partnerships) to develop a detailed proposal.
- 2.3. In so doing further consideration will need to be given to a number of issues, summarised below.

Geographical Coverage

- 2.4. The starting point for the work is the assumption that there is need to explore the connectivity issues for the east of the M1, see Annex 1.
- 2.5. Discussions with the Transport Officer Group have suggested that an initial – scoping – phase be undertaken, through which the geographical scope of any detailed work would be identified.
- 2.6. The area in Annex 1 is significant in size, from the A47 north of Peterborough through to areas of Hertfordshire which are inside the M25 orbital. As a consequence it might be appropriate for any examination of connectivity issues as a number of more discrete study areas. The initial scoping phase would enable an informed view to be taken on this issue.
- 2.7. The initial scoping phase would identify the strategic connectivity challenges that need to be addressed, taking into account the transformational nature of some of the planned investment, such as East West Rail.

Timeline

- 2.8. In order to inform the development of the overarching Transport Strategy, the study(ies) would consider connectivity issues for the period to 2050, beyond the time horizon of current local plans. It is therefore proposed that the study(ies) will work with the Mayoral Combined Authority, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships to identify potential growth scenarios beyond that time horizon while not prejudicing or pre-judging detailed consideration of future land-use patterns.
- 2.9. The timeline for the work is important:
 - a) In summer 2019 the Forum will be asked to submit its recommendations for the first 5-year investment programme for the Major Road Network: any early conclusions from the work would be used to inform this submission, although it should be noted that for a scheme to be delivered in that initial 5-year programme period planning for its delivery would have to be at an advanced stage.
 - b) In addition, there will be a Spending Review at some point during 2019. Any outputs from the connectivity study(ies), together with the work on the overarching Transport Strategy, will form part of the evidence base on which the this Forum will develop a submission to Government.

Proposed Approach

- 2.10. Once the initial scoping stage has been completed it is proposed that the connectivity study(ies) will follow a similar approach to that adopted for the connectivity study already underway:
 - a) Phase 1 – Development of Scenarios
 - b) Phase 2 – Identification of Key Corridors
 - c) Phase 3 – Development of Proposals
- 2.11. Annex 2 sets out in more detail the essence of what each phase of the study(ies) would comprise. For expedience, some aspects of each phase could be run in parallel provided they are sufficiently managed so that the outcomes of one can be captured and inform another.
- 2.12. The connectivity study(ies) will consider the extent to which each of these supports the strategic ambition of enabling the region to realise its economic potential in a way that delivers 'net environmental betterment'.
- 2.13. The connectivity study(ies) will also consider the extent to which proposals might be taken forward that enable achievement of that strategic ambition to be accelerated.

Use of the Regional Evidence Base

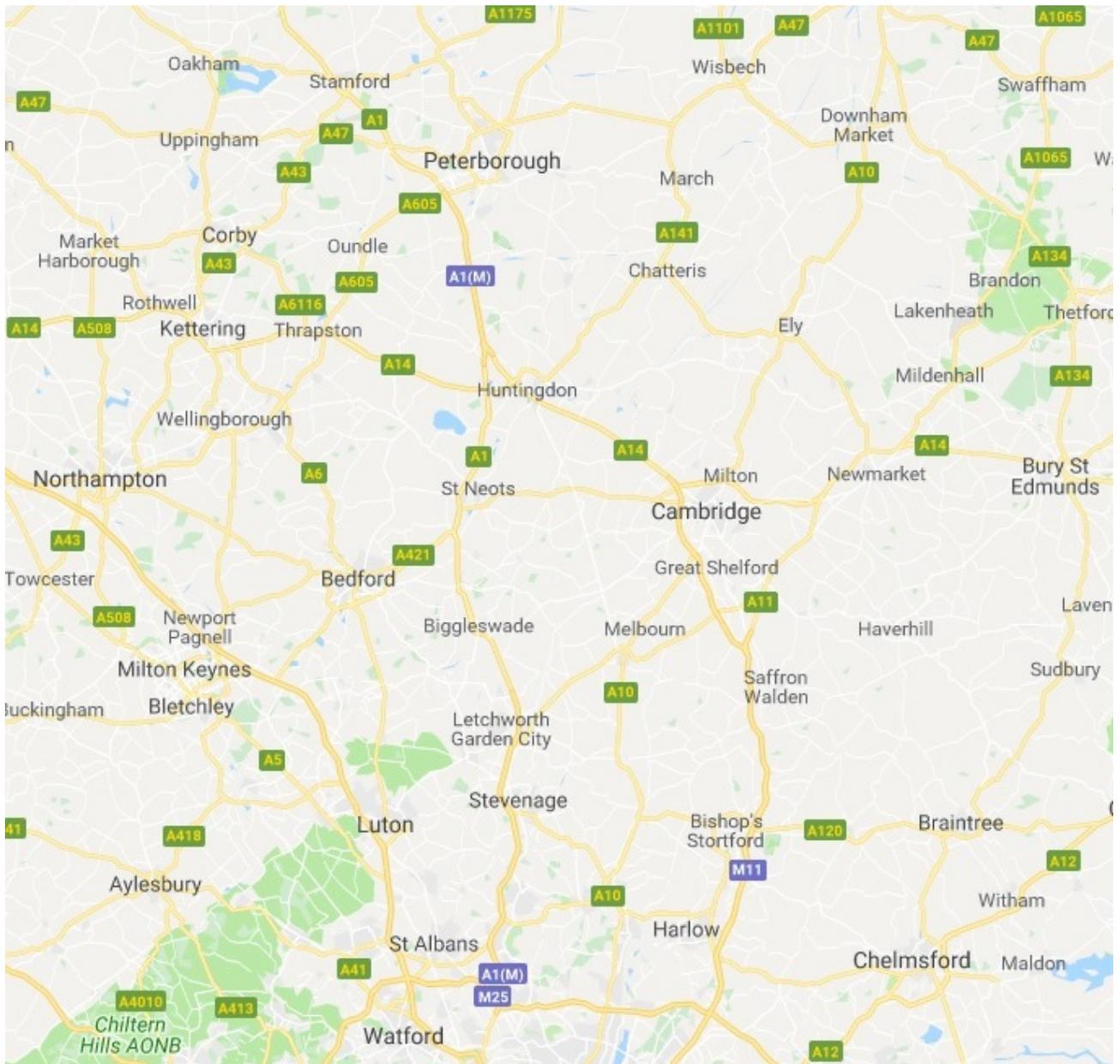
- 2.14. England's Economic Heartland as the Sub-national Transport Body is putting in place the Regional Evidence Base: this comprises three elements:
- a) The 'Databank' (available since February 2018) – brings together information on planned growth (housing and economic), socio-economic data and transport information.
 - b) The 'Datahub' (work in progress) – in effect a 'sandbox' that supports the development of the eco-system across the Heartland and encourages innovation.
 - c) The 'Policy Scenario Model' (proof of concept model available) – a tool that provides the region's partners with the capacity to explore the relative implications of different growth and/or policy scenarios.
- 2.15. The information held in the databank will be used as the foundation on which to develop potential future scenarios. The relative implications of those alternative scenarios will be explored using the policy scenario model.

Interdependencies/Other Relevant Work

- 2.16. In taking forward the connectivity study the following interdependencies must be taken into account:
1. *Transport-related Studies/Projects, including:*
 - The A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet
 - The 'expressway' study – west of the M1
 - The A1(M) strategic study
 - East West Rail – Central Section
 2. *Growth Plans*
 - Local Plans – adopted and emerging
 - Local Industrial Strategies
 - Corridor-wide Strategic Economic Vision – emerging
 - Growth Deals – agreed and emerging
 - Government commissioned 'growth studies'
- 2.17. The Forum is invited at this stage to provide any guidance it might wish the development of the detailed proposal to take into account

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Head of Technical Programme
January 2019

Annex 1 – Map of proposed study: Heartland area east of M1



Annex 2 – Proposed Scope of Each Phase

PHASE 1 – DEVELOPMENT OF SCENARIOS

Aim

Using planned growth (both economic and housing) as the foundation, work with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Planning Authorities to identify potential development scenarios for the period to 2050.

Input

Planned growth as set out in Local Industrial Strategies and Local Plans.

Approach

Needs to take into account the implications of committed infrastructure investment – such as East West Rail and the A1 Corridor study – for the scale and nature of future travel demand.

Needs to identify key trends that will influence the scale and nature of future travel demand – for example: changed commuting patterns, particularly in relation to London; the extension of digital infrastructure (fixed and mobile) and the widespread availability of Mobility as a Service.

Needs to identify the key variables to be used in the development of scenarios – for example the cost of travel – which will be used to develop a set of scenarios for Phase 2.

Needs to also confirm the performance measures that will be used to assess the implication of scenarios on the transport system.

Output

The study will identify key scenarios that will arise a result of planned activity within the study area.

PHASE 2 – IDENTIFICATION OF KEY CORRIDORS

Aim

Taking outputs from Phase 1 (scenarios) to assess their relative impact on the overall transport system.

Input

Scenarios identified in Phase 1; set of performance measures agreed in Phase 1; strategic transport system (a combination of the rail network and Major Road Network).

Approach

Needs to use the Policy Scenario Model Tool and apply the emerging scenarios to the strategic transport network.

Needs to use the agreed set of performance measures to assess the output from the Policy Scenario Model Tool and identify key corridors.

Output

Identification of key corridors to be considered in Phase 3.

PHASE 3 – DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSALS

Aim

Taking the output from Phase 2 (identification of key corridors) and, working with Local Transport and Planning Authorities, identify those corridors where there is a need for investment in order to accommodate the consequence of future development scenarios.

Input

Key corridors (and performance measures) from Phase 2; agreed targets for performance measures (developed in part in Phase 1, and in part through the work on the Transport Strategy); investment proposals on the key corridors already identified by Local Transport and Planning Authorities.

Approach

Needs to compare the output from Phase 2 for the key corridors with the target performance measures as a means of identifying whether the impact of future scenarios justifies intervention.

Where the need for intervention is identified and where a proposed intervention already exists (included within Local Transport Plans and/or Infrastructure Delivery Plans), needs to undertake an assessment of whether the proposed intervention is the most appropriate in order to deliver target performance measures.

Where the need for intervention on a key corridor has not previously been identified by a local transport authority, needs to identify the outcomes that an intervention should deliver and the most appropriate way of developing an intervention.

Output

Confirmation of the key corridors that need to be included in major investment planning, including Spending Review priorities and the long term Major Road Network and large local majors programme in order to support/enable the delivery of growth that will contribute to the overall ambition of realising the economic potential of the region.

Where a proposed intervention for a key corridor already exists include that within the investment pipeline that supports delivery of the Transport Strategy, including consideration for priority as part of an identified investment pipeline.

Where there is currently no proposed intervention for a key corridor, identify the need for a more detailed study of that corridor with a view to the outcome from that study being fed into the investment pipeline.