

# Business and Property Committee

Item No.

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Major Infrastructure Improvements</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>8 September 2017</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b> The County Council, at its meeting in December 2016, agreed a motion recognising “the vital importance of improving our transport infrastructure to deliver the new jobs and economic growth that is needed in the years ahead’ and “the importance of giving a clear message of its infrastructure priorities to the government and its agencies, to ensure that there is universal recognition of their importance to the people of Norfolk.’ Three projects were identified as priorities for the coming years; Great Yarmouth 3 <sup>rd</sup> River Crossing; Norwich Western Link; Long Stratton bypass.	

## Executive summary

<p>At its meeting on 20 June 2017, the Business and Property Committee requested an update on the third river crossing for Great Yarmouth and improvements to the Acle Straight. The Chairman of Business and Property understands that while building of the bridge falls under the remit of Environment, Development and Transport Committee it was important to understand the economic benefits for this Committee.</p> <p>This report updates Members on the economic benefits identified to date for the three priority infrastructure projects being undertaken by the county council, including more detail on the Great Yarmouth 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing.</p> <p>Further detailed progress updates on the projects are to be presented to EDT Committee at its next meeting on 15 September 2017.</p> <p>Other A47 improvements are being led by Highways England and form part of their Roads Investment Strategy programme. Details are not included in this report, however updates on this and the A47 Alliance are provided to EDT Committee.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p><b>Members are asked to note and comment on the economic benefits of the infrastructure projects provided in this report.</b></p>
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## 1. Updates

### 1.1. Great Yarmouth 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing

During 2016 a submission was made to the Department for Transport (DfT) to seek funding to develop the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing (3RC) as part of a fast track programme of the Local Major Projects funding. This bid was successful and £1m was approved by DfT to support the development of the OBC with a deadline for submission of 31 March 2017.

1.2. The submission was made to DfT on 30 March 2017 with a hoped for decision to grant the project ‘Programme Entry’ status by July 2017. Unfortunately, due to the national elections this date has slipped and a new approval date is awaited from DfT. However the OBC makes a good case for the project, and details are provided in section 2 below.

1.3. The project is to provide a new opening bridge (proposed in the OBC as a bascule bridge) over the River Yare. It links direct from Harfreys Roundabout at

the A47 (formally the A12) and connects across the river to South Denes Road at a new signal junction.

- 1.4. The 3RC provides significantly improved access to the town centre and importantly to the port enterprise zone and outer harbour areas. As a 3<sup>rd</sup> crossing, it also provides much needed network resilience for the town, and takes pressure off of the existing main route into the town and port via either Haven Bridge or Fuller's Hill.
- 1.5. Norwich Western Link  
A report was taken to EDT Committee in June 2016 setting out initial work to assess options and next steps for the project. A Member Working Group was also set up to monitor the work being undertaken and it has reported to Committee on a regular basis.
- 1.6. The report provided a range of work to be completed during the remainder of 2016 and first half of 2017 to further develop the case for the Western Link in broad terms. This work is due to be reported in more detail to EDT Committee on 20 October 2017. It is therefore too early for this report to set out the economic case for the project, however there are a range of identified benefits that are set out in section 2 below.
- 1.7. Long Stratton Bypass  
The A140 provides an important link between the two key regional centres of Norwich and Ipswich. The road is currently mostly single carriageway until it meets the A14 trunk road dual carriageway. There is also a short section of dual carriageway at Diss. There have been calls for decades from the Long Stratton community and users of the A140 for a bypass due to the delay and disruption that travelling through the village creates.
- 1.8. A new dual carriageway design was developed and was close to delivery in 2005, however a lack of funds resulted in this option not being delivered. The preferred route alignment of this option still exists, however in May 2016 an updated area action plan was adopted and has established an alternative bypass solution linked to the delivery of significant housing growth in Long Stratton. The plan provides for 1800 new homes and commercial development areas. 600 of the homes are located on the west side of the A140 (to the north of the village) and 1200 are allocated to the east side of the village, along with the main commercial development allocation.
- 1.9. The adopted plan sets out that the provision of a new bypass on the east side of the village must be included as part of the development allocation. It states that: "The bypass will be completed before 250 of the new homes are occupied." and "Given that the bypass is necessary in order to enable housing development to take place on LNGS1, a substantive element of funding is expected to come from the developer."
- 1.10. The adopted area action plan sets out a range of objectives related to the bypass and these are summarised in section 2 below.

## **2. Evidence**

- 2.1. Great Yarmouth 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing  
The Outline Business Case (OBC) submitted to DfT in March 2017 is a comprehensive set of documents that sets out the five tests that DfT consider when evaluating a project for funding. These cover the strategic case, the economic case, financial case, commercial case and management case. More detail is provided in the master document which is published on the county council's website – follow this [link to outline business case submission](#).
- 2.2. The main economic benefits are set out in the OBC and are as follows:

### 2.3. **Strategic Case** (Achievement of Objectives):

The project will have a significant and beneficial impact on traffic in the town, and this will give rise to a range of benefits, helping to deliver the scheme's objectives.

- Traffic levels will be reduced on key links.
- The existing bridges will both experience a reduction in traffic
- Congestion will reduce
- Journey times on key routes will be reduced
- Journey time reliability will be improved
- Historic areas of the town will experience less traffic
- Vehicular access to South Denes and the Outer Harbour will be greatly improved
- Access for pedestrians, cyclists will be improved
- Bus users will benefit
- Road accidents will be reduced
- Greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced
- The resilience of the local road network will be enhanced

### 2.4. **Economic Case** (Benefit Cost Ratio):

The value for money category is based on the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). The BCR includes the transport benefits as well as reliability benefits and wider economic impacts and gives a **BCR of 3.5**. Using DfT assessment criteria, this means the project provides **High** value for money.

The scheme is expected to lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and these have been monetised and included in the BCR figure.

### 2.5. Other Cases:

**The Commercial Case** provides evidence of the commercial viability of the proposed scheme, and describes the procurement strategy that will be used to engage the market and deliver the scheme.

**The Financial Case** sets out the costs of the project (see section 3 below) and the funding contribution being requested from DfT.

**The Management Case** demonstrates that the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing scheme is capable of being delivered successfully in line with recognised best practice. It describes the processes that are being put in place to ensure that the project is effectively delivered, and properly evaluated.

### 2.6. Norwich Western Link (NWL)

Mouchel (now WSP) was appointed to review work previously undertaken on a NWL, and to assess the need for intervention in this area. They reviewed available evidence, engaged with local Parish Councillors and met with statutory environmental bodies to consider:

- The need for transport intervention in the western quadrant of Norwich;
- The case for a Western Link, including a review of previously identified issues and objectives;
- Local considerations that could influence the project including the NDR and associated mitigation measures, Highways England's plans to dual the A47 between Easton and North Tuddenham, environmental designations and the development of Local Plan;
- The possible options to progress; and
- How any assessment could be taken forward.

### 2.7. A further report to Norfolk County Council's Environment, Development and Transport (EDT) Committee on 8 July 2016 [Link to EDT Committee - 8 July 2016 \(see item 9\)](#) set out further work to be undertaken to report back to Committee during 2017. This work includes the following (in summary):

- Developing a local strategy to demonstrate commitment to address existing local problems.
- Undertake initial traffic modelling and appraisal using the existing traffic model and broad assumptions to test the economic viability.
- Undertaking a Quality Audit review of the currently proposed NDR traffic management mitigation measures to ensure the full benefit of those measures can be maximised to address local problems.
- Developing a monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure a robust evidence base can be collated at a later stage. This will also review the NDR monitoring and evaluation plan.
- Engaging with Highways England regarding their A47 improvements.
- Identifying work required to respond to funding opportunities.
- Seeking advice from legal specialists to determine the level of requirement for any environmental assessment.
- Undertaking work to provide input to the Local Plan and NATS review.
- Exploring engineering solutions to be discussed with Environment Agency and Natural England so feasibility and possible mitigation options can be considered.
- Outlining the scope of work required to prepare a DfT WebTAG compliant Strategic Outline Business Case.

2.8. More recent local consultation in 2016 within the communities currently impacted by traffic in the western quadrant of Norwich, highlighted the following concerns:

- Rat running
- HGV routing
- HGV volumes
- Longwater Interchange delays and safety (with poor access provision to existing large housing development)
- Increasing traffic on local road network post NDR
- Network resilience
- Limited Public transport provision
- Limited Cycling & walking infrastructure
- Future housing developments need advance infrastructure
- Impact of commercial development
- Costessey park & ride no longer goes into city

2.9. The NWL is expected therefore to address the above by delivering the following (still developing) project strategic objectives:

- To support economic growth by:
  - improving the efficiency of the transport network; and
  - enabling planned development of employment and commercial sites.
- To support planned housing provision;
- To improve strategic connectivity on the national road network;
- To improve the resilience of the strategic and local road network;
- To improve connectivity and accessibility for all modes;
- To improve the quality of life for local communities;
- To protect and enhance the local environment.

2.10. Long Stratton Bypass

The Area Action Plan (AAP) adopted in May 2016 following an independent inspection process sets out the following details in terms of benefits of the bypass developed from the evidence presented.

2.11. **Vision** – “Long Stratton - a revitalised large village based around its historic

linear street pattern and Conservation Area, growing and building on its existing broad range of jobs and services into a thriving small town. The delivery of a bypass will enable a safer and more inviting town centre with increased shops and services and an enhanced Conservation Area.”

- 2.12. **Town Centre Objective** – “The town centre will be revitalised following the removal of heavy lorries and other traffic through the delivery of a new bypass. The historic streetscape of the Conservation Area will be enhanced and a safer and more attractive environment will be created with potential to provide a new ‘market place’ to act as a focal point.....”
- 2.13. **Environmental Objective** – “The environment of the town centre will be significantly improved through measures to capture the benefits of the bypass removing through traffic to provide a safe and inviting location, more attractive for shopping and services and to provide an enhanced setting for the heritage assets, including those in the Conservation Area.”
- 2.14. The Long Stratton AAP also sets out [para 5.11] that ‘The master planning of LNGS1 and the supporting detailed transport evidence will establish the design of the bypass. This will take into account the requirement for the bypass to fulfil a number of roles, including: access to substantial areas of new housing and employment; forming a strategic route; and providing the boundary to the east of the settlement. This will provide the context for the precise funding and delivery arrangements. In advance of the detailed design, the AAP does not set an alignment for the bypass but a broader safeguarded corridor within which the bypass can be delivered.’

### **3. Financial Implications**

#### **3.1. Great Yarmouth 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing**

The OBC submission sets out the financial position for the project. The future cost of delivering the Great Yarmouth Third River Crossing, including allowances for risk and inflation is estimated at £120m (the out-turn capital cost). The project will also give rise to costs for annual operation and maintenance, and for the long term renewal of the infrastructure, with an annual average cost of estimated at £262k. The Council will be required to meet the ongoing costs of operation, maintenance and renewal.

- 3.2. The County Council is seeking a contribution of £98m from the DfT towards the capital costs of the scheme, and the Council will support this with a further local contribution of £22m. A total of £4.9m has been spent prior to submission of the OBC, including £3.8m by the County Council. This, together with a proportion of the Council’s expenditure prior to submission of the OBC represents 20% of the complete cost of delivering the scheme.

#### **3.3. Norwich Western Link**

In terms of the provision of a new link road connecting the A47 west and A1067 a previous scoping study noted that the costs of a road scheme could be between £28m-£106m (based on 2014 prices), depending on the route chosen and the form of the road (single or dual carriageway).

- 3.4. Some further work has been completed and is expected to be finalised and reported in more detail to EDT Committee in October 2017. This is currently anticipated to confirm that there is a case to continue with the delivery of the NWL project, however given the scale of the project and the scope of work required to comply with the necessary statutory and other processes, funding is being sought to support the delivery of the project through its next phases.

### 3.5. Long Stratton Bypass

A detailed scheme for the bypass is still to be provided by the developer and until this is completed (as part of a wider master-planning and planning application process) it is not possible to determine the cost of the project. At this time it is also not possible to determine the level of funding that the development will provide towards the cost of the bypass. Work is ongoing to establish these costs.

## 4. **Issues, risks and innovation**

- 4.1. Robust risk management arrangements are in place for the 3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing and are being developed for the Norwich Western Link ahead of the next stages of work for that project. Arrangements are still being developed for the delivery of Long Stratton Bypass, working with the main developer. Each project will identify, quantify, manage and review risks, including financial risks as they are progressed.

## 5. **Background**

### 5.1. Previous committee reports

Norwich Western Link:

[Link to EDT Committee - 8 July 2016 \(see item 9\)](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing:

[Link to EDT Committee - 17 March 2017 \(see item 11\)](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> River Crossing outline business case submission

[Link to outline business case submission](#)

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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