

Strategic Transport Forum 7th December 2018

Agenda Item 3: Transport strategy: vision and principles

Recommendation: The Forum is recommended to:

- a) Consider and endorse, subject to amendments agreed by the meeting, the proposed approach to the Transport Strategy;
- b) Agree the vision and three overarching principles and proposed approaches for defining and measuring them for the Economic Heartland strategy;
- c) Consider the proposed content of the transport strategy, set out in Annex A.

1. Context

- 1.1. A key priority for this Forum is the development and implementation of the Transport Strategy for the Heartland.
- 1.2. The National Infrastructure Commission recommended that realising the economic potential of the Heartland should be viewed as a priority for the UK. The Commission set out their case that the potential exists to double, if not triple, the economy over the next 30 years.
- 1.3. Growth on the scale identified by the Commission is transformational in nature. Realising the Heartland's economic potential will not be achieved through a 'business as usual' approach. It will require a co-ordinated approach to the planning and delivery of strategic infrastructure and services across a range of sectors.
- 1.4. In addition, the scale of the ambition for the region represents an opportunity to actively encourage innovation; to support the development of new solutions and business models for service delivery. Such an approach is consistent with the Transport Strategy contributing to the delivery of the Grand Challenges identified by the Government as underpinning its Industrial Strategy.
- 1.5. Our Transport Strategy needs to play a fundamental role in delivering the ambition for the Heartland for the next thirty years (to 2050). The strategy must be realistic yet visionary (given the time frame to 2050) and will need to deliver for the immediate, medium and long term. It must set out the Strategic Transport Forum's ambitions for all residents and businesses in the Heartland region to have access to high quality transport provision and choice, and how that will be achieved.
- 1.6. Our Strategy needs to define the challenges that need addressing within England's Economic Heartland and will set out the mechanisms, through the Strategic Transport Forum, for future governance and decision making processes.

- 1.7. The accelerated delivery of planned levels of growth cannot be achieved without significant investment in rail, road and digital infrastructure across the region. The transport strategy is not intended to set out specific investment priorities: instead, planning investment pipelines will be a continuously evolving exercise - as new pressures and priorities evolve and new funding streams become available.
- 1.8. The Strategy will need to map out a set of performance standards that can be measured against, and which will define our current transport system performance and aspirational level of performance. Developing a strong understanding through performance metrics will allow Forum members to: define priorities; help identify the need for an intervention; inform the appropriate type of solution needed – be that capital infrastructure or a revenue-supported initiative; and continue to measure and evaluate the impact of all of our interventions.
- 1.9. This Forum has already commissioned work to put in place the Regional Evidence Base. The Regional Database brings together information on planned growth (housing and economic), socio-economic data and transport information, which provides an evidence baseline across the Heartland on which we can build and develop our performance ambitions.

Strategic Linkages

- 1.10. The transport strategy is being developed within the wider strategic activity surrounding the Oxford – Cambridge corridor and will play a very significant role in determining our collective ability to deliver on some critical cross corridor ambitions. These include:
 - If the region is to meet the ambition of realising its economic potential in a way that delivers 'net betterment' it will be necessary for the Transport Strategy to be underpinned by the need to carbon-neutral by 2050. Such a requirement is consistent with the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan.
 - Working with Local Enterprise Partnerships to deliver a pan corridor economic vision to 2050.
 - Rising to the challenge of improving housing affordability and housing supply for local communities, expected to be addressed through a pan corridor spatial vision, aimed for publication in spring 2019.
- 1.11. The geographical scope of the transport strategy reflects the extent of England's Economic Heartland – from Swindon through Oxford and Milton Keynes and on to Cambridge, and from Northamptonshire to Hertfordshire. In keeping with the recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission – which have been supported by the Government – it will also consider wider strategic linkages

eastwards in Norfolk and Suffolk. The transport strategy will also address issues of common interest with adjoining areas, including London and Midlands Connect.

- 1.12. In taking forward its work on the transport strategy, England's Economic Heartland will ensure that the linkage with and implications of investment in wider strategic infrastructure – such as digital, utilities and water resources - are properly taken into account.

2. Vision and Strategic Principles

- 2.1. The Vision and Strategic Principles are important building blocks for the work to develop the overarching transport strategy. They will provide the basis for all of the England's Economic Heartland work strands, including the way we design and approach the Expressway connectivity study and the Major Road Network decision making process.
- 2.2. Together the Vision and Strategic Principles should look to deliver on the ambition to have a zero-carbon transport system by 2050.
- 2.3. They must reflect that, for the corridor to meet its economic potential, infrastructure provision and travel patterns cannot be determined by "business as usual" – underpinning the vision and principles must be a value that our approach across the Heartland promotes and enables innovation.
- 2.4. Previously, this Forum considered the emerging vision and principles of the transport strategy. In March 2018, the Forum raised the following priorities for the transport strategy vision and principles:
 - the Transport Strategy, and its Vision needs to reflect the pace of change underway in the Heartland
 - the Strategy needs to ensure there is a focus on the here and now as well as the longer term
 - the themes of reliability, resilience and capacity need to be captured and reflected in the Transport Strategy;
 - the Strategy needs to include measurable performance expectations within it;
 - the focus across the Strategy should be about communities, rather than places;
 - the Vision should be short and memorable;
 - inclusivity (travel for the many) and global connectivity are important considerations.
- 2.5. These comments need to be viewed in the context that the period to 2050 marks a period of significant transformation for the Heartland; projects such as East West

Rail and the Expressway, alongside other major investment opportunities (including Northampton to Old Oak Common rail opportunity; next steps in the A1(M) corridor study; Cambridge south station; and the Major Road Network investment programme), will create new, and changed travel choices within the Heartland. They will open up access to wider economic opportunities for people living within the Heartland, and widen housing markets for our growing economic centres.

2.6. The Forum's requirement was for a vision for the transport strategy that would be memorable and focused on our communities, yet reflect the transformational growth in the Heartland area, and it serves.

2.7. **The overarching vision for the England's Economic Heartland transport strategy has been developed as:**

Connecting Our People and Places with Opportunities and Services

2.8. **The proposed vision is supported by three priority 'principles' of:**

- **Economy**
- **Accessibility and Inclusion**
- **Quality of Life**

2.9. **Principle One – Economy**

The function of a Sub National Transport Body is to drive economic growth, including managing the opportunities for transformative growth and inclusive growth. Our Strategy will be embedded within, and support the delivery of the cross corridor Economic Vision for the Ox-MK-Cam corridor as well as also individual LEPs' Local Industrial Strategies and, where appropriate, strategic economic plans. EEH Business Unit is working with LEP partners, and Price Waterhouse Coopers – who are leading the cross corridor economic vision - to ensure we are contributing to shaping and delivering the best economic future for the corridor.

Our Strategy needs to unlock employment and housing growth through co-ordinated investment in infrastructure and services, doing so in a way that encourages innovation and smarter use of existing assets.

Our Strategy needs to stimulate innovative and creative business via strategic, long term policy making and will improve safety, reliability, and resilience of the network to maximise productivity of goods, services, and commuters

2.10. **Principle Two - Accessibility and Inclusion**

This Forum has already identified the need to provide high quality transport options for all users of the transport network, reducing or addressing barriers to travel – be they financial, cultural or digital or physical barriers. Our Strategy needs to be

inclusive, resilient, and remove barriers to opportunities. It needs to unlock opportunities for residents to realise their full potential.

The Strategy needs to capture and respect the diverse nature of the Heartland; the differences between different parts of the corridor and harness the opportunities that those different needs present for our transport network.

We will use our Regional Evidence base to provide the foundation on which to develop our understanding. We will continue to work with Transport Focus, and other representative groups of users to ensure, our approach to performance standards is meaningful to users (both residents and businesses).

EEH has the support and engagement of the DfT's Accessibility and Inclusion team to help inform the work.

2.11. Principle Three – Quality of Life

The Government's response (published November 2018) to the National Infrastructure Commission's report set out its ambitions for achieving net gains in biodiversity and natural capital across the Heartland. The Government reported that the Oxford-Cambridge corridor was an opportunity to "embody the ambitions of the 25 Year Environment Plan, including commitments on water and energy efficiency, as well as flood, waste and wider sustainability standards in new development including housing and infrastructure."

The long standing commitment of this Forum has been to ensure that the Transport Strategy addresses the need to improve the quality of life, and as part of that promote a continuous reduction in the negative impact of our transport system.

It is in this context that the ambition of creating a zero-carbon transport system by 2050 sits.

This is a challenging ambition, but will create opportunities for businesses to develop new solutions that are more efficient and innovative in the way they the Heartland uses resources. This will be achieved by harnessing the use of data, promoting place shaping and the co-ordination of investment in strategic infrastructure and services.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1. The development of the Transport Strategy will be taken forward with the involvement of stakeholders from across our partners, communities and businesses in the Heartland, as well strategic stakeholders in adjoining regions and nationally.

- 3.2. The work programme is based on developing a draft of the Strategy for publication in July 2019. To deliver to this timeline, the draft Strategy will be brought to the Forum's meeting in May 2019.
- 3.3. In the interim period to May 2019, each meeting of the Forum will be invited to consider a series of topic papers, each of which will provide the evidence and policy solutions that will inform the Transport Strategy.
- 3.4. Following publication in July 2019 and the Strategy will undergo a period of consultation and debate – ensuring we are capturing all of the opportunities and expectations of local stakeholders. This timeframe will also allow us to reflect emerging policy conclusions from local partners and Government, particularly:
 - Cross Corridor economic vision (expected March 2019);
 - Pan corridor spatial vision (expected spring 2019);
 - Preferred route announcement for the central section of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway and associated Connectivity Study (expected summer/autumn 2019);
 - Rail Review (expected autumn 2019) and
 - The second Roads Investment Strategy (expected autumn 2019).
- 3.5. In order to ensure a comprehensive and effective consultation process for the transport strategy, EEH Business Unit will develop a communications and engagement plan for the consultation. The Plan will be submitted to Forum members to get a strategic steer and final approval.
- 3.6. It is intended that the final Transport Strategy will be complete and ready for final publication in spring 2020.

Implementation of the Transport Strategy

- 3.7. Alongside consideration of the Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Strategy (including the associated performance standards), Forum members will want to ensure the Transport Strategy:
 - Embraces Innovation at every opportunity – building in procedural and technological innovation across all elements of the transport strategy;
 - Ensures the correct approach and level of rigour around our environmental and sustainability assessment – in the form of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.
 - In line with a commitment to keep the investment pipeline under regular review, the Strategy will set out the Forum's approach to prioritisation of investment.

- Is designed to allow for new, innovative funding packages to be developed – capturing and creating maximum investment opportunities from both the public and private sector.

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Annex 1

Transport Strategy – Initial Draft Framework Narrative

- 1.1. In seeking to deliver the vision and priorities, and to be measured against defined performance standards, the transport strategy will be set out with two distinct areas of focus: delivering transformative growth – ensuring we make the most of our significant transport infrastructure (existing and new); and secondly ensuring high quality service provision for our users.

Part One – Delivering Transformational Growth

- 1.2. The Heartland region presents a once in a generation opportunity to deliver transformational economic growth, disrupting the status quo and redefining our expectations for the future.
- 1.3. Realising this opportunity is not guaranteed, but if we succeed, it means the way people move around the region will fundamentally change the way they live and work. Transformed connectivity will create new opportunities and linkages. What are currently a series of discrete housing and economic areas will merge into a single entity.
- 1.4. Travel patterns, and in particular commuting patterns, will become more varied. New centres for knowledge will complement our existing world class universities to supply future generations of engineers, scientists and innovators to fuel the region's economy. England's Economic Heartland will be a globally significant place.
- 1.5. Expectations for what growth means for our environment – built and natural – must also be transformed, delivering net betterment to the people and places where it occurs.
- 1.6. This will require an integrated approach to the planning of new infrastructure.
- 1.7. EEH proposes to maximise the potential for transformational growth in the Heartland area through: maximising our global links (through London Luton airport, our strategic connections to London Heathrow and Stansted airports, the UK's most significant ferry ports, most of whom will transfer freight to road and rail routes which pass through the Heartland area); driving sustainable and inclusive growth and maximising the impact of major investments in the Heartland area – including East West Rail and the Oxford – Cambridge Expressway.

Part two - Maintaining Service Levels

- 1.8. Supporting the transport strategy will be a series of policy strands. Each strand will consider how EEH can define, implement and monitor, a level of service that our users can expect from the transport network.

1.9. To shape the transport strategy, each policy strand will undergo a stage of evidence gathering, review and policy development. This activity will consider what level of service users require, and can expect from the transport, and EEH's options for achieving that.

1.10. Identified topics for review are set out below:

1.11. Movement of goods - Freight and Logistics

Freight and logistics play a key role in servicing the needs of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor and the wider Heartland area over the next 30 years. The transport strategy will need to consider, and set out how EEH can create the right conditions regionally to support the freight industry, balancing the effective distribution of freight with the environment; by planning for freight holistically.

The study will define a clear starting point for freight sub nationally, analyse the implications of future scenario changes, identify how EEH can capitalise on opportunities and mitigate risk – and plan for this by drawing on technical conclusions. The study will also consider the implications of future freight demand on the Heartland's transport network and identify corridors requiring strategic prioritisation and/or intervention to ensure productivity and growth continues to occur, applying win/win solutions to the industry and consumers where possible.

1.12. Movement of People - First Mile/Last Mile

Improving connectivity across the Heartland is critical to realising its economic potential. Providing a more attractive first and last mile journey for people is key to increasing the value of the corridor's economy over the next 30 years as well as enabling sustainable growth.

A robust first/last mile strategy for the Heartland will improve and expand travel choices for people via new and improved transport interventions. Delivering these initiatives regionally will facilitate a step change in how more people can move seamlessly on reliable, clean and affordable transport systems.

The work will

- Analyse current transport options for all passengers based on affordability, journey time reliability, transport choices and other considerations (such as passenger safety);
- Understand the current and future demand for passenger journeys – using existing data, and data collected through EEH's emerging simulation tool.
- Look to define performance standards for journey times, and explore creative options for unlocking opportunities to achieve journey choice and reliability –

through innovative approaches, such as mobility as a service, the internet of things, electric vehicles and demand for responsive transport as well as and better partnership working.

- Explore options for better integration of ticketing on public transport.

1.13. Maintaining standards - Behaviour Change

The transport strategy will seek to further understand people's decision making when it comes to travel choice (for work and personal use). The Heartland has a finite amount of capacity on its road network and congestion won't be resolved by simply building our way out of the situation. We therefore need to encourage smarter decision making to ensure we understand: why people make the choices they do; what influences travel behaviour; what disruptors and barriers to behaviour change exist; and examples of best practice in achieving behaviour change.

The work will explore issues like fare elasticity, perceptions of public transport and environment and health. Outcomes of this work will help inform what steps need to be taken to ensure the defined performance standards we require for the EEH network – which is likely to include journey time reliability; average travel times between key locations and to ensure EEH remains on track for meeting our strategic ambitions such as a zero carbon transport network by 2050

1.14. Maintaining standards - Network Resilience, and maintaining the quality of the asset

The thousands of kilometres of highway infrastructure is one of the Heartland's most valuable assets. Our transport network is maintained by 11 transport/highway authorities who, alongside Highways England and Network Rail ensure it remains safe and accessible to users and provides a key role in servicing economies.

EEH is not replacing the role of Highway Authorities, but it is key that we understand the ways in which we can exercise the functions available to us from government to address challenges in this area. Planned, routine and reactive maintenance are becoming increasingly data driven for example, data we're beginning to capture extensively in our regional evidence base.

EEH provides a powerful voice to Whitehall in lobbying for additional investment and making the case for strategic transport policy and funding interventions, subject to findings, this could be extended to network resilience. Transport corridors transcend authority boundaries and the effects of climate change coupled with finite resources and funding leave the network susceptible to disproportionate stress –barriers to our economic potential.