

Strategic Transport Forum

7th December 2018

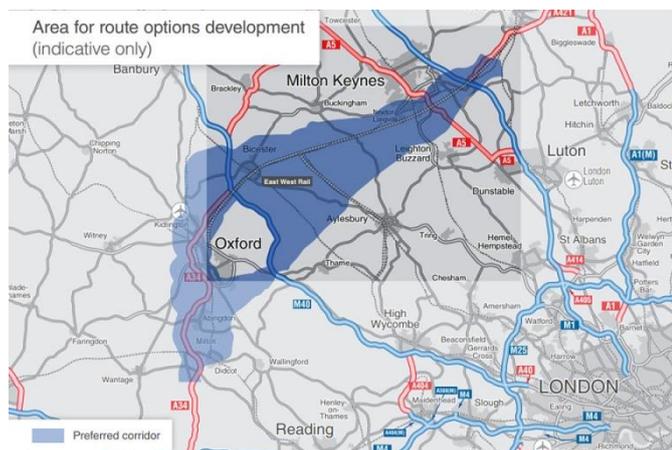
Agenda Item 4: Expressway and Connectivity Study

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Forum:

- a) Write to the Secretary of State for Transport setting out its concerns regarding the approach being following by the expressway project team
- b) Consider and endorse, subject to any amendment agreed by the meeting, the proposed approach for taking forward the connectivity study

1. Strategic Context

- 1.1. The announcement on the preferred corridor for the section of the 'expressway' corridor between Oxford and Milton Keynes was made on Wednesday 12th September.
- 1.2. As part of the decision, Roads Minister Jesse Norman MP, stated that Corridor B had been selected because it was "able to support existing transport needs, as well as transformational growth, regeneration and redevelopment across the wider corridor". By aligning the corridor choice with East West Rail, Highways England stated that the road would allow for better integration between transport modes.



- 1.3. The route of the expressway around Oxford remains open, with route options to the east and west of the city. Highways England are now examining options for the route around Oxford further, exploring environmental mitigation options and taking more evidence from local people.
- 1.4. It is understood that Highways England's proposed timeline for the Expressway is:

- Autumn 2018 –Summer 2019: data collection and analysis of evidence to inform route options
 - Summer 2019: Secretary of State’s consideration of route options
 - Autumn 2019 - announcement of routes for formal consultation: the expectation is that there will be between five and ten routes identified and on which Highways England will formally consult
 - Summer 2020 – preferred route announcement and commencement of Development Control Orders.
- 1.5. Highways England’s current data collection round is underway. We understand meetings are taking place with local parish, planning, and transport authorities. The EEH Business Unit has offered the Highways England team access to the Regional Evidence Base, in particular the Regional Database.
- 1.6. However, there remains a significant concern about the way in which the engagement is being undertaken, with a recurring concern being one that engagement in the work to develop the proposal is too opaque. Many partners across the Heartland have experience of working with the Department for Transport and Network Rail in the development of the East West Rail project. The contrast with the approach to engagement on that project compared with the expressway is deeply worrying. By engaging with local partners as ‘shareholders’ in the East West Rail project the level of support for the scheme amongst partners and local communities has been consistently high. Indeed the (positive) response to the recent consultation on the draft Transport and Works Act Order for the Western Section has been cited as being unprecedented for a scheme of that scale.
- 1.7. The level of engagement with the EEH Business Unit subsequent to the announcement of the preferred corridor is giving increasing cause for concern.
- 1.8. This Forum – as the Sub-national Transport Body – is responsible for developing the overarching Transport Strategy for the region. It has a strong and effective working relationship with the Department for Transport, one that reflects the importance given by the Department to the role of the Sub-national Transport Bodies.
- 1.9. It is therefore both surprising and disappointing that the expressway project team have not actively sought stronger engagement with the EEH Business Unit, nor indeed this Forum. The planning and development of the expressway project must take place within the wider strategic context provided by the work of this Forum.
- 1.10. There is a particular concern about the lack of transparency to date as to how the expressway team is taking into the timing and implications of other strategic investments.

- 1.11. The Government's ambition for the Heartland – to realise its economic potential and to deliver a net betterment – requires a co-ordinated approach to the planning and delivery of strategic infrastructure.
- 1.12. The Secretary of State's commitment to accelerate the delivery of the East West Rail project means that the Western Section (linking Oxford with Milton Keynes/Bedford and Aylesbury) will be open some 10 years before the opening of the expressway. Moreover, through the work of England's Economic Heartland, a business case is being put in place that will see the Western Section delivered as a digitally connected corridor – benefiting not only rail passengers but the surrounding area.
- 1.13. Similarly the Secretary of State's commitment to accelerate delivery of the Central Section means that the route from Oxford to Cambridge will be open some 5 years before the opening of the expressway.
- 1.14. These investments will both help support the delivery of planned growth and support modal switch – a key consideration given the need to deliver 'net betterment'. In taking forward the work on the expressway there is a growing concern that the benefits derived from the investment in rail and digital connectivity may be inadvertently undermined by the expressway.
- 1.15. For the avoidance of doubt, none of this is to suggest that there is not a need for additional investment in the strategic road network. However what is of growing concern is that the approach being followed by the expressway team is not giving sufficient weight to the need to place their work within the wider strategic context and that it is not giving sufficient consideration as to the implications of other strategic investments.

2. **Managing Transformational Growth**

- 2.1. In seeking to realise the economic potential of the region there is a need to consider a number of issues:
 - *Economic Productivity* – in recent years economic growth across the region has largely been achieved by exploiting the capacity of the existing infrastructure. Increased demand, combined with underinvestment in infrastructure and services has led to deterioration in infrastructure condition, an increase in congestion and a decline in resilience.
 - *Digital Economy* - the continued growth of the digital economy, in particular the creation of new business models for service delivery (by both public and private sectors) means that the way in which people access opportunities and services continues to undergo fundamental change. This is already having implications

on travel patterns and demand, and is a trend that is likely to continue moving forward: indeed it is one that we need to encourage if we are to deliver net betterment

- *Changes in Geography* – improved connectivity (whether physical or digital) means that traditional ‘market areas’ have changed and will continue to change. Underpinning the National Infrastructure Commission’s work is the premise that across the region the sum will be bigger than the individual parts: our approach to identifying future infrastructure needs through the connectivity study needs to be shaped by the principle that both housing market areas and functional economic areas will change.
- *Pace of Change* – in seeking to identify future infrastructure requirements there is a need for flexibility and adaptability in our approach. The extended timescale associated with designing and delivering major new infrastructure makes it vulnerable to becoming outdated by societal and economic changes. The danger therein is that the desire, and need, to encourage a more sustainable pattern of development is inadvertently undermined by investment in infrastructure and services that perpetuate patterns of travel and demand that are inconsistent with the need to deliver ‘net betterment’.
- *Vision-led Scenario Planning* – by definition transformational growth requires a paradigm shift. Traditional approaches to the identification of infrastructure requirements run the risk of perpetuating the current paradigm. We therefore require a new approach to strategic infrastructure planning, one that employs new tools and uses scenario planning to set the framework within which more detailed proposals at the local level can be developed and implemented.

3. **Consideration - Designing a Road for the Future**

3.1. The issues set out above represent an opportunity to use the need to invest in the road network as part of an integrated approach to the planning and delivery of strategic investments, thereby achieving a paradigm shift. In order to realise that paradigm shift:

- We must use the ambition to use promote a place-shaping approach as the opportunity to focus investment in infrastructure and services in ways that enable residents and businesses to make different choices. This requires a focus for plan making that is broader than simply the planning and delivery of additional housing.
- We must use the need to reduce the impact of the transport system as the basis for encouraging innovation amongst businesses and service providers: in

particular continued investment in digital infrastructure (both fixed and mobile) should be used as a catalyst for encouraging new delivery models in all sectors of society that encourage change in travel behaviours and future travel demand.

- We must use investment in infrastructure and services – both existing and potentially new – to improve the productivity of business across the region, thereby supporting the ambition to realise the region’s economic potential whilst delivering net betterment.
 - We must ensure that in identifying future infrastructure and service needs we use tools and adopt processes that are fit for purpose; in particular our approach should value investment in infrastructure and services that reduce the impact of travel.
 - We must align the need for investment in more efficient infrastructure and services with the economic vision for the region thereby using the ambition for the region to encourage the development of new products and services that can be used to challenge in other global markets.
- 3.2. The approach set out above needs to be applied consistently at all levels – from the corridor level through to individual projects. It is the approach that is being used to underpin the development of the overarching Transport Strategy
- 3.3. An implication of the challenges and opportunities facing the Heartland is that traditional solutions to identified problems may no longer be appropriate: investment in digital connectivity may, for example, reduce the need for some long-distance travel. Indeed the need to achieve net betterment may serve as justification for reviewing the balance of investment between infrastructure sectors.
- 3.4. Reference has already been about the relative timing of the investment in the expressway relative to that in the delivery of East West Rail and the critical importance of ensuring that investment in the proposed expressway does not inadvertently undermine the Government’s overarching ambition for the Heartland.
- 3.5. In addition, Highways England’s work on roads for the future has commenced. The work will look at how roads need to be designed to accommodate (and maximise the potential of) connected and autonomous vehicle technologies and other digital advancements. Schemes such as the expressway must be designed in ways that reflect this thinking.
- 3.6. Based on the information available to the EEH Business Unit it is recommended that the Forum needs to write to the Secretary of State for Transport as a matter of some urgency. It is recommended that the letter whilst recording the Forum’s

support for the Government's commitment to invest in strategic infrastructure, the development of detailed proposals for individual schemes cannot be undertaken without due consideration to changes in future travel patterns, changes in future travel demand, technological advancements, and change that will be made as a result of the investment already planned in strategic rail infrastructure and services, and digital infrastructure.

4. **Connectivity Study**

- 4.1. The EEH Business Unit has been working with officials from both the DfT and Highways England to take forward the 'connectivity study' that was announced in the Autumn Budget 2017.
- 4.2. The Unit has been working with DfT and Highways England on a proposed approach to the connectivity study. While DfT and Highways England were keen to develop a conventional approach to the connectivity study, building in assumptions about growth of existing corridors, the EEH Business Unit is working to ensure the connectivity study will capture the transformational growth opportunities that will be in place/underway in the Heartland area, including East West Rail.
- 4.3. Annex 1 sets out the proposed study approach and commissioning brief for the connectivity study. This has been the subject of a discussion at the Transport Officers Group, who broadly endorsed the approach. It is the subject of on-going discussions with both the Department for Transport and Highways England.
- 4.4. The Forum is asked to consider and, subject to amendment, endorse the approach set out in Annex 1.
- 4.5. It is important to ensure that the connectivity study is not developed in parallel with the work on the overarching Transport Strategy. It therefore needs to align with our overall vision of "Connecting our people and places with opportunities and services", through the overarching priorities of: economy; accessibility and inclusion and quality of life.
- 4.6. The proposed opening date for the 'expressway' is towards the end of the time horizon for the current round of Local Plans. In looking to identify the connectivity requirements linked with the 'expressway' it is therefore necessary to consider potential growth scenarios beyond that time horizon. In so doing it is essential that the connectivity study does not prejudice or pre-judge detailed consideration of future land-use patterns.

- 4.7. In a similar vein, there is a need to consider the implications of economic growth – both in terms of scale and location, as well as the implications of potential changes to business models.
- 4.8. As a consequence of the above, the working arrangements for the connectivity study will involve all local partners: local transport authorities, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships.
- 4.9. Detailed aspects of the 'expressway' – including consideration of routing and/or the location of junctions – will be influenced by these future scenarios, reinforcing the critical importance of ensuring a strong, co-ordinated approach to both the 'expressway' work and the connectivity study. As a consequence, it is proposed that the connectivity study will be taken forward in three stages:
- Phase 1 – Development of Scenarios.
 - Phase 2 – Identification of Key Corridors – based on the outcome of phase 1.
 - Phase 3 – Development of Proposals
- 4.10. The timeline is important. In summer 2019 the Forum will be asked to submit its recommendations for the first 5-year investment programme for the Major Road Network.
- 4.11. It is likely that the output from the connectivity study will identify a number of issues requiring attention and for which proposals will need to be developed. As with the approach adopted for the Roads Investment Strategy (delivered by Highways England), it is appropriate to identify schemes for development as part of the investment pipeline.
- 4.12. It is also important to bear in mind that a Spending Review is expected at some point during 2019. The output from the connectivity study, along with the work on the overarching Transport Strategy will form part of the evidence base on which the Heartland partners build their case for submission to Government.

Naomi Green
Head of Technical Programme
December 2018

Connectivity Study: Proposed Commissioning Brief

NOTE: this is a draft scope of works: it is the subject of on-going discussion with EEH partners, the DfT and Highways England.

1. Strategic Context – the Multi Modal Spine

- 1.1. The National Infrastructure Commission identified the need for improved connectivity as one of the key issues that needs to be addressed in order to enable the region to realise its economic potential.
- 1.2. The Commission went on to identify the creation of an east-west multi-modal spine as a 'once-in-a-lifetime' opportunity. The Commission identified the need for the spine to comprise both rail and road elements.
- 1.3. In its response to the Commission the Government supported the concept of the multi-modal spine, but also recognised the importance of ensuring that the spine is taken forward as an integral element of the wider transport system for the region. The 'connectivity study' is being taken forward in response to the latter point.
- 1.4. In commissioning the connectivity study it is essential that it takes into account:
 - *Timing of Investment* – the 'western section' of East West Rail is scheduled to open in 2022/23 and the 'central section' in 2027/28. Installation of digital infrastructure along the rail corridor will mean that delivery of East West Rail will represent a double-step change in terms of connectivity.
 - *Supporting the need for a Paradigm Shift* – delivery of a digitally enabled rail corridor is consistent with the need to encourage a modal shift as part of the need to achieve 'net betterment'. Any subsequent investment in the road network must complement that investment in rail and digital infrastructure: it must not inadvertently undermine travel patterns established with the opening of East West Rail.
 - *Linkages with the Wider Transport System* – the delivery of improved east-west connectivity must also be used to improve north-south connectivity across the region. The combination of opening of East West Rail and HS2 will realise opportunities in the late-2020s to develop new north-south rail services as realistic and attractive alternatives to the road network.

2. The Expressway

- 2.1. The National Infrastructure Commission identified the need to invest in the road network as part of a co-ordinated approach to improving connectivity along the core Oxford – Milton Keynes – Cambridge corridor.

- 2.2. The Commission proposed an 'expressway' as part of the multi-modal spine in order to meet this need. It went on to identify that whilst the core of an 'expressway' already exists between Milton Keynes and Cambridge (the A421/A428 corridor), there is no equivalent exists between Oxford and Milton Keynes.
- 2.3. The Government, through the Department for Transport, commissioned Highways England to undertake a strategic study with the purpose of investigating the case for linking existing roads to create a strategic east-west road link between Oxford and Cambridge, via Milton Keynes and Bedford: the aims of which would be to improve connectivity, build network resilience and support economic growth.
- 2.4. The Government announced its preferred corridor for the 'expressway' between Oxford and Milton Keynes in September. In making the announcement the Government left open the question of its preferred corridor around Oxford.
- 2.5. Further work has been commissioned from Highways England to identify a preferred route for the 'expressway' with the intention of this being announced in the second half of 2019.
- 2.6. The Government's intention is that delivery of the 'expressway' will form part of Highways England's Road Investment Strategy. The earliest date for the opening of the 'expressway' is 2030.

C: THE CONNECTIVITY STUDY

3. Purpose

- 3.1. The Government has tasked England's Economic Heartland to take forward the 'connectivity study'. The aim of the study is to ensure that locations not on the 'expressway' benefit from that investment.
- 3.2. In taking forward the work on the connectivity study it is essential that consideration is given to:
 - Changes in the scale and nature of future travel patterns arising from the opening of East West Rail as a digitally enabled transport corridor
 - The longer term land use and economic planning opportunities across the region, including but not limited to those within the immediate study area
 - The inter-action between the proposals for the 'expressway' and the rest of the road network – and vice-versa.

These considerations should be applied consistently to all three elements of the 'multi-modal' spine – East West Rail, the 'expressway' and the connectivity study.

- 3.3. The output from the connectivity study will:
 - Inform the development of the Transport Strategy

- Inform any revision in the local transport authority owned elements of the Major Road Network.
- Feed into the development of the pipeline of investment projects that supports the delivery of the Transport Strategy

Where appropriate, investment projects identified as being of strategic importance may be included within the scope of the proposed geographically specific National Policy Statement for the region.

4. Study Requirements

- 4.1. The Transport Strategy for the region will deliver the vision of 'connecting people and places with opportunities and services'.
- 4.2. The output from the connectivity study must therefore:
 - a) Support and facilitate the delivery of planned growth – both housing and economic growth
 - b) Support inclusive growth by delivering an overall improvement in access for individuals to opportunities and services – including job opportunities, skills, education, leisure, retail and health facilities
 - c) Maximise opportunities for integration of travel modes to enable individual seamless multi-modal journeys
 - d) Result in an overall improvement in the level of service afforded to transport users irrespective of mode – in terms of journey reliability, network resilience and journey time
 - e) Result in an overall improvement in safety for all travellers – including road users, non-car users, local residents and road workers.
- 4.3. In addition, proposals identified through the connectivity must positively contribute towards the overarching requirement to achieve 'net betterment'.

5. Study Approach

- 5.1. The proposed opening date for the 'expressway' is towards the end of the time horizon for the current round of Local Plans.
- 5.2. In looking to identify the connectivity requirements linked with the 'expressway' it will therefore be necessary to consider potential growth scenarios beyond that time horizon. In so doing it is essential that the connectivity study does not prejudice or pre-judge detailed consideration of future land-use patterns.
- 5.3. In a similar vein, there is a need to consider the implications of economic growth – both in terms of scale and location, as well as the implications of potential changes in business models.

- 5.4. As a result of consequence the working arrangements for the connectivity will involve all local partners: local transport authorities, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships.
- 5.5. Detailed aspects of the 'expressway' – including consideration of routing and/or the location of junctions – will be influenced by these future scenarios, reinforcing the critical importance of ensuring a strong, co-ordinated approach to both the 'expressway' work and the connectivity study.
- 5.6. As a consequence the connectivity study will be taken forward in three stages:
 - Phase 1 – Development of Scenarios
 - Phase 2 – Identification of Key Corridors
 - Phase 3 – Development of Proposals
- 5.7. The initial commission will deliver Phase 1. The output from each stage will be used to confirm (and if appropriate refine) the scope of subsequent phases.

Use of the Regional Evidence Base

- 5.8. England's Economic Heartland in its role as the Sub-national Transport Body is putting in place the Regional Evidence Base: this comprises three elements:
 - The 'Databank' (available since February 2018) – brings together information on planned growth (housing and economic), socio-economic data and transport information.
 - The 'Datahub' (work in progress) – in effect a 'sandbox' that supports the development of the eco-system across the Heartland and encourages innovation.
 - 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.
- 5.9. The Regional Evidence Base will be used to underpin the development of the Transport Strategy, including work commissioned for the connectivity study.

6. Study Geography

- 6.1. The aim of the connectivity study is to ensure that locations not on the 'expressway' benefit from that investment.
- 6.2. By necessity this means that the geographical scope of the connectivity study will be wider than that of the 'expressway'.
- 6.3. The extent of the study geography will be determined by the Strategic Steering Group, however it will at the very least include:
 - Linkages to the west of Oxford, including but not necessarily limited to the A420 corridor to Swindon

- Linkages to the south of the 'expressway' preferred corridor, including but not necessarily limited to the:
 - A418/A4146 corridor linking Oxford – Aylesbury – Milton Keynes
 - North/south corridors through Aylesbury
 - A4146/A505 corridor linking Aylesbury – Luton
 - Linkages to the north of the 'expressway' preferred corridor, including but not necessarily limited to the:
 - A44 corridor linking Oxford and Banbury
 - A43 corridor linking M40 – Northampton
 - A505 corridor linking Milton Keynes and Northampton
 - Linkages with the wider strategic transport beyond the region where these are appropriate.
- 6.4. Whilst the Department for Transport has published its initial proposal for the Major Road Network the connectivity study may identify result in 'A-roads' currently not on the Major Road Network being identified as more significant. At the same time, roads currently identified by the Department for Transport as forming part of the Major Road Network may become less significant in the future.
- 6.5. The Strategic Steering Group will keep the geography of the study under review throughout the study process in order to ensure that it remains appropriate. Changes to the study area will only be made with the agreement of the Strategic Steering Group.

7. Interdependencies/Other Relevant Work

- 7.1. In taking forward the connectivity study the following interdependencies must be taken into account:

Transport-related Studies/Projects

- The 'expressway' study
- The A1(M) strategic study
- The M25 South West Quadrant Strategic Study
- East West Rail – Western Section
- East West Rail – Central Section
- Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study
- The A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet

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'

- 7.2. The connectivity study shall consider the extent to which each of them supports the strategic ambition of enabling the region to realise its economic potential in a way that delivers 'net betterment'.
- 7.3. The connectivity study shall also consider the extent to which it can bring forward proposals that support the ability of other studies/projects to enable the region achieve its strategic ambition.

8. PHASE 1 – Development of Scenarios

Aim

- 8.1. 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

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

Approach

- 8.3. Needs to take into account the implications of committed infrastructure investment – such as East West Rail (digitally enabled) – for the scale and nature of future travel demand.
- 8.4. Needs to identify key trends that will influence the scale and nature of future travel demand – for example extension of digital infrastructure (fixed and mobile) and the widespread availability of Mobility as a Service.
- 8.5. Needs to identify the key variables to be used in the development of scenarios – for example the cost of travel – and use these to develop a set of scenarios for use in Phase 2.
- 8.6. Needs to also confirm the performance measures that will be used to assess the implication of scenarios on the transport system.

Output

- 8.7. Four scenarios to be used in Phase 2.
- 8.8. Agreed set of performance measures that will be used to assess the impact of the four scenarios on the transport system.

9. PHASE 2 – IDENTIFICATION OF KEY CORRIDORS

Aim

- 9.1. Taking the output from Phase 1 (4 scenarios), assess their relative impact on the overall transport system.

Input

- 9.2. Four 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

- 9.3. Needs to use the Policy Scenario Model Tool and apply the four scenarios to the strategic transport network.
- 9.4. Needs to use the agreed set of performance measures to assess the output from the Policy Scenario Model Tool and identify key corridors.

Output

- 9.5. Identification of key corridors to be considered in Phase 3.

10. **PHASE 3 – DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSALS**

Aim

- 10.1. 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

- 10.2. 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

- 10.3. 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.
- 10.4. 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.
- 10.5. 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

- 10.6. Confirmation of the key corridors that need to be included in the Major Road Network in order to support/enable the delivery of growth that will contribute to the overall ambition of realising the economic potential of the region.
- 10.7. 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 the Major Road Network investment programme.
- 10.8. 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.

11. Timescales

- 11.1. The work associated with the connectivity study needs to be taken forward at pace, partly to ensure alignment with work associated with the 'expressway' and partly to help shape the framework for future revisions of Local Plans.
- 11.2. Proposed timescales for each phase are as follows:
 - Phase 1 – commission December 2018; output required February 2019
 - Phase 2 – commission December 2018 (specifically the development of Policy Scenario Model); output required June 2019 (to feed into the Transport Strategy)
 - Phase 3 – commission post June 2019
- 11.3. The extent of work commissioned under Phase 3 will be dependent upon the need for additional work following the assessment of current proposals contained within Local Transport Plans and/or Infrastructure Delivery Plans.
- 11.4. The timing of any additional work will be dependent upon the position of a proposed intervention within the overall pipeline of investment required to support the delivery of planned growth – a pipeline approach to the commissioning of work will enable costs to be managed and optimised in a way that will enable schemes to be ready for delivery when they are needed.

12. Governance and Management

- 12.1. The Government has commissioned England's Economic Heartland to take forward the connectivity study.
- 12.2. The EEH Business Unit will provide the technical and professional leadership for the connectivity study.
- 12.3. The connectivity study will be managed overall by a Strategic Steering Group whose membership will comprise:

- EEH Business Unit
 - Department for Transport
 - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
 - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
 - Highways England
 - Homes England
 - East West Railway Company
- 12.4. The EEH Business Unit will establish a reference group that supports the connectivity study. The reference group will comprise representatives from local transport authorities, local planning authorities and local enterprise partnerships within the study area.
- 12.5. The Strategic Transport Forum – as the Sub-national Transport Body – will receive regular updates on progress with the connectivity study and provide guidance as required.
- 12.6. The output from each phase of the connectivity study will be considered by the Strategic Transport Forum within the context of the on-going work associated with the development of the overarching Transport Strategy for the region.

November 2018

(Appendix to Annex 1) Connectivity Study: Draft Principles

1. The connectivity study will form an input into the development of the overarching Transport Strategy.
2. The objectives for the study will be developed within the framework provided by the objectives for the overarching Transport Strategy.
3. The study will consider the strategic issues for the transport system supporting England's Economic Heartland for the time period upto 2050.
4. In order to consider how communities not on the 'expressway' itself can still benefit from it, the study will need to consider issues across the study area for the 'expressway' – i.e. from M4 Junction 13 across the Heartland to M11 Junction 14.
5. In considering the issues across the study area it will be appropriate to consider wider linkages – e.g. in considering connectivity along the A34 corridor between Didcot and Oxford it will also be necessary to consider the role of the A420 between Swindon and Oxford and the role of the rail corridor between Didcot and Oxford.
6. In considering the linkages between the 'expressway' and the wider highway network, the study will need to take into consideration:
 - Committed improvements to the Strategic Road Network set out within the current Roads Investment Strategy
 - The output from other Highways England led strategic studies – specifically A1(M) Corridor and M25 South West Quadrant
 - East West Rail – including the need for improved connectivity to/from rail stations along the rail corridor
 - The output of relevant Network Rail Route Strategies
7. In considering future connectivity requirements the study will consider the implications for future travel patterns and travel need arising from:
 - The transformational impact of delivering the 'multi-modal spine'
 - The implications of the digital economy and further development of digital infrastructure
 - The development of new business models for transport use and services

Use will be made of 'policy scenarios' to explore the implications of these and any other relevant factors.
8. The development of policy scenarios will build upon the regional evidence database assembled by the Forum.