



Strategic Transport Forum

19th June 2020

Agenda Item 5: Investment Pipeline

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Forum:

- a) Agrees the Investment Pipeline set out in the Transport Strategy.**
- b) Agrees the programme of connectivity studies to be taken forward in support of the Investment Pipeline**

1. Context

- 1.1. The draft Transport Strategy includes the investment pipeline. This includes those projects that are considered to be of regional significance. The Investment Pipeline will be reviewed on a 5-year cycle, in keeping with the approach adopted for investment in strategic infrastructure at the national level (e.g. through the Road Investment Strategy).
- 1.2. Each review will provide the opportunity to update on progress with the delivery of identified priorities in investment programmes. It will also provide the opportunity to incorporate the outcome of connectivity studies undertaken by EEH, and to identify further studies that need to be taken forward in the next 5-year period. Again, this is in keeping with the approach adopted by national bodies such as Highways England.

2. Investment Pipeline.

- 2.1. Each proposal in the pipeline is has a foundation in the draft Transport Strategy, ensuring there is a clear framework and narrative to support the need for investment.
- 2.2. Schemes included in the pipeline have been identified via a number of sources, including:
 - independent studies undertaken by partners, or as a collaboration with EEH, such as the Oxfordshire Rail Study
 - individual study work commissioned by EEH, such as the Freight and Logistics Study and Rail Passenger Study (Phase 1)
 - collaborations of work between EEH and national delivery partners, such as Network Rail (System Operator) and Highways England
 - The EEH Regional Evidence Base
- 2.3. The programme of connectivity studies forms a key part of the Investment Pipeline going forward. The draft investment pipeline and corridor studies programme included within the draft Transport Strategy have been considered as part of the draft Transport Strategy's ISA. This appraisal at the strategic (regional) level is in addition to the individual environmental assessment that each scheme will have go through as part of the normal process of scheme development.

3. Connectivity Studies

- 3.1. The Strategic Transport Forum has been consistently clear that, to inform the Transport Strategy and longer term investment plan for the Heartland, an evidence based

understanding of the challenges and opportunities relating to connectivity in the area is required.

- 3.2. EEH Business Unit has worked with partners to develop a strategic programme of connectivity studies. In line with the requirements of the draft Transport Strategy, the connectivity studies will be multi-modal in approach and address challenges and opportunities related to that individual corridor/ area.
- 3.3. At its meeting on 15th May the Forum considered and endorsed the short list of corridors for connectivity studies that had been identified by officers. Subsequent to the Forum, an independent technical assessment of the short listed corridors has been completed.
- 3.4. The technical assessment of corridors considered two elements: an appraisal of the corridors against the principles of the draft Transport Strategy; and secondly, consideration of the sequencing of studies. The latter offering the opportunity to take into account the linkage between the need for infrastructure and the delivery of planned growth. The recommended programme of connectivity studies brings together the output from the two elements to achieve a rounded programme.
- 3.5. During the assessment phase, the consultants identified opportunities to rationalise the short list of corridors, particularly where short listed corridors were in fact similar in geographical nature.
- 3.6. Taking forward the programme of connectivity studies is key element of EEH's work programme for the forthcoming years and has been identified by the Department for Transport (DfT) as an important part of the Sub National Transport Body (STBs) role.

4. Proposed programme of corridor studies

- 4.1. The recommended programme of studies is shown at Appendix 1. The naming of some corridors has been amended compared to the original short list to better reflect the focus is on improving connectivity between places (as opposed to road names).
- 4.2. The exact geographies (i.e. red line boundaries) and study scope for each connectivity study will be developed and agreed with partners as each study is taken forward.
- 4.3. Some corridors included in the short list considered by the Forum already have studies underway (or proposed), being led by local or strategic partners. This too is reflected in the recommended programme. The key issue is to ensure the strategic importance of those studies is rightly reflected in the investment pipeline, but that we avoid duplication of effort by proposing to commission separate pieces of work. This includes the A505, A414, A10 and A1.
- 4.4. Forum Members will be mindful of the relationship between the Rail Passenger Study (Agenda Item 7) and the wider EEH programme of connectivity studies. The majority of corridors identified in the Passenger Rail Study have linkages with the programme of connectivity studies. In these cases, the studies will be multimodal in approach, with an expectation that Network Rail will work alongside the wider connectivity study to ensure a truly multimodal approach is developed.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. Subject to Forum approval, the recommended programme of connectivity studies will be included in the draft Investment Pipeline in the draft Transport Strategy. In the meantime scoping work on the studies proposed for year 1 will commence. Scoping will be undertaken as a collaboration with partners from the relevant local authorities and LEPs, as well as Highways England and Network Rail.

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Proposed Connectivity Studies Programme

Corridor		Potential scope	Programme
A	London – Bucks – MK – Northampton	Corridor includes road and rail connections between the towns of Aylesbury and High Wycombe as well as the rail link between High Wycombe and Old Oak Common where the Chiltern Railway service can link to HS2, Crossrail and the Heathrow Link. The corridor also includes links to Milton Keynes and Northants.	Year 1 (2020/21)
B	Peterborough – Northampton – Oxford	This is a large geography, which also incorporates the East West connections between M40 and A1 (A43/A45) corridor (a key section of the Peterborough – Northampton – Oxford corridor). The East West connections between M40 and A1 (A43/A45) study was initially suggested as standalone study but, with both corridors scoring (and sequenced) highly, it is sensible to merge them into one study. <i>*Towards the south of this corridor, there will be some overlap with study work proposed as part of the Oxford – Milton Keynes (east) connectivity study. The studies are exploring different connectivity corridors but given the overlap, the studies will need to consider the impact of each other.</i>	Year 1 (2020/21)
C	Luton – Milton Keynes – Daventry	It is proposed that the A5 (Houghton Regis – Daventry (A5 corridor) and Luton – East Milton Keynes corridors form one study, including consideration of the M1 and A5. It is noted the road corridors perform different functions but the geography could be considered as one noting the multi-modal nature of proposed studies. This would form the corridor Luton – Milton Keynes – Daventry. <i>* While there are some overlaps with the proposed Oxford – Milton Keynes (east) connectivity study, it is intended that this study will look more broadly at north south links, rather than the east west links being explored through the Oxford – Milton Keynes (east) study. In addition, this study will follow a year after the proposed Oxford – Milton Keynes (east) study, allowing this study brief to be influenced by its emerging outcomes.</i>	Year 2 (2021/22)
D	Swindon – Oxford – Didcot area study	It is proposed that this study now be taken forward as an area based study showing how transport and digital infrastructure and services can provide the best connectivity for local people and secure investment for economic growth. The study will cover the area Swindon – Oxford – Didcot encompassing the A34 and A420 which were previously assessed separately and will include consideration of enhanced rail connectivity identified in Swindon/Wiltshire and Oxfordshire study work, also bus corridor and opportunities for decarbonisation. In parallel, further work will be developed in partnership with Highways England to consider the	Year 2 (2021/22)

Corridor		Potential scope	Programme
		strategic needs of the A34, connecting south to the M4 and north to the M40. This is a key route between the southern ports, EEH and beyond to the midlands and the north.	
E	Watford – Aylesbury – Bicester – M40	This corridor links Hertfordshire, Bucks, and Oxfordshire and takes in the A41 corridor, including growth areas of Aylesbury and Bicester.	Year 2 (2021/22)
F	North Northamptonshire	This study would include the geographic area Northampton – Corby – Wellingborough which was previously considered as a standalone corridor.	Year 3 (2022/23)
G	Oxford – M40 junctions	This study would encompass Oxford – M40 on the eastern side of Oxford and would need to follow strategic work undertaken with Highways England in relation to the A34. Therefore the study is placed in Year 3 to follow partnership work with Highways England on the A34 (proposed in year 2).	Year 3 (2022/23)
H	Luton- Bedford – Northamptonshire	This corridor encompasses the A6 corridor, noting clusters of planned housing development and potential for the study to align with the principle of supporting the regional economy.	Year 4 (2023/24)
I	Northampton – Milton Keynes	This corridor encompasses the A508 between Milton Keynes and Northampton. The A508 was highlighted as one of the hotspots with correlating levels of congestion and high volumes of freight in the EEH Freight Study.	Year 4

Map of proposed corridor studies (*Please note these maps are illustrative and do not provide red line boundaries. The maps are produced for the proposed programme and do not exactly reflect the individually assessed corridors)

