

LINCOLNSHIRE

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT BOARD

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TRANSPORT BOARD
7 OCTOBER 2013

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR RICHARD GRAHAM DAVIES (CHAIRMAN)

Officers in attendance: Paul Coathup (Assistant Director of Highways and Transportation); Ian Kitchen (Transport Manager – Policy and Orders); John Pollard (Mouchel); Gary Billington (Mouchel)

Also in attendance: P Denby (Lincolnshire Enterprise Partnership Representative); Holly Smith (North East Lincolnshire Council); Rob Fairy (Network Rail)

8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C J Davie, S F Kinch, Mrs J Churchill, Richard Wills, Executive Director for Communities and Jodie Booth (North Lincolnshire Council).

In the absence of Richard Wills, Paul Coathup deputised as Advisor to the Board.

9 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Members' Interests.

10 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19 JULY 2013

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on the 19 July 2013 be agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

11 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

A report outlining the Governance arrangements was presented to the Board and it was confirmed that Lincolnshire County Council were still awaiting further information relating to Part 2 of the Governance arrangements from the DfT although it was anticipated there was unlikely to be significant change. In view of this, the Board therefore agreed to make a decision on funding priorities for major schemes in Lincolnshire at the meeting using the framework as proposed.

RESOLVED

(a) That, in the absence of any further guidance from DfT, the Board agreed to make a decision on its priorities at this meeting.

(b) That, should the need arise, the decision be reviewed in the light of any comments subsequently received from DfT.

12 FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Board was informed that EAST (Early Assessment and Sifting Tool) assessments had now been undertaken on the proposed schemes in line with the decision at the previous meeting.

A brief overview was given to the Board outlining the EAST assessment process, highlighting that it was a tool to support the decision-making process by assembling information in a consistent way and helping the Board form a decision on the proposed schemes. It was stressed that the Board should, when making their decision on which scheme(s) would be recommended for implementation, take into account the strategy policy fit, the economic benefits and contribution to growth, the current scheme status and realistic delivery timescale, along with the risks to delivery.

A copy of the EAST Comparison Overview was circulated at the meeting which outlined the following four schemes which were discussed in detail.

(a) Grantham Southern Quadrant Link Road

The Grantham Southern Quadrant Link Road forms a 3 km single carriageway road (with crawler lane in part) that links the B1174 to A52 Somerby Hill. The scheme was a major part of the Grantham Southern Relief Road and would be located to the south of the Grantham urban area and the village of Somerby Hill and to the north of the village of Somerby Hill and to the north of the villages of Little Ponton and Great Ponton. The scheme included a bridge crossing over the River Witham and the East Coast Main Line and would form the second phase Grantham Southern Relief Road which would connect the A1 to the A52.

It was reported that this scheme had received a high degree of consultation, was well advanced and currently going through the planning process. It was reported that this scheme would be able to be delivered in between two and five years if prioritised by the Board. It was estimated that the cost would be approximately £46.1 m, although it was expected that this cost may be reduced as a result of an ongoing value engineering exercise. It was noted that Lincolnshire County Council had an excellent working relationship with Network Rail in respect of issues associated with the crossing of the East Coast Main Line.

(b) Grantham Southern Relief Road

The Grantham Southern Relief Road formed a predominantly single carriageway route linking the A1 to the A52 located to the south of Grantham urban area. The Grantham Southern Relief Road consists of the following two sections:

(i) The King 31 link, which would connect the A1 to the B1174 at the western end of the relief road and formed part of the Spittlegate Development (also known as the

"King 31" development). This element already had planning approval (it should be noted that this was due to expire in August 2014), and

(ii) The Southern Quadrant Link Road which would link the B1174 to A52 and would serve the proposed Southern Quadrant mixed use development.

The Board felt that the King 31 aspect of the above Scheme needed a review of the design aspect if the Board decided to progress this Scheme further.

(c) Skegness Western Relief Road

The Skegness Western Relief Road would provide a new link between the A158 and the A52 to the west of Skegness. The scheme was at the feasibility stage so the route alignment had not been finalised. Two route alignments had been identified and both tie-in to the A52 and the A158 at the same point via roundabout junctions. The scheme would form a single, two-lane all-purpose 7.3 m wide carriageway with 1 m hard strips and 2.5 m verges for a length of some 2.4 km with roundabouts at either end.

The Board observed that the strategic impact scores were lower for the Skegness scheme than for the Spalding and Grantham schemes and that development of the scheme was far less advanced. It was reported that a Feasibility Study had been undertaken during 2006 and a lot of further work would need to be undertaken to update the feasibility report and re-evaluate the expected impact of the scheme. It was also reported that the route alignment had not been precisely defined and there was flexibility and scope to change how the scheme was currently presented.

(d) Spalding Western Relief Road – Phase 1 only

Phase 1 of the Spalding Western Relief Road provided the initial phase of a road that would ultimately provide a link between Spalding Common and Spalding Road, Pinchbeck. Phase 1 would provide approximately 2 km of highway infrastructure from Spalding Common to a roundabout adjacent to Hill's Drain and provided access via a roundabout to the Holland Park development which would include 2,250 dwellings. Phase 1 formed part of the outline planning permission granted for the Holland Park development.

The Board felt that this scheme was well developed and the level of assessment was high. It was felt that this was a necessary first stage of a much larger project for a relief road around the western side of Spalding. It was noted that this scheme had strategic importance for the housing development in Spalding.

It was confirmed that the Board's overall budget allocation from the DfT towards one or more of the above schemes was £11.9 m. Considerable discussion followed regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the schemes and whether the funding should be used to support more than one scheme.

Key points included:

- (i) In view of the relatively modest amount of funding available, the greatest benefits could be secured by supporting a single scheme.
- (ii) Since the proposed Skegness scheme was at a relatively early stage, there was a higher risk of it not being delivered within the required timescale. However, it was felt that in view of its potential to support the important coastal tourism economy, it was a strong candidate for further consideration for inclusion within the emerging Strategic Economic Strategy.
- (iii) In the case of the Spalding scheme, the scheme was well advanced and a strong funding package was being developed. The true highway benefits of the scheme would only be fully realised when the entire western relief road was completed in the longer term.
- (iv) The timescale for the delivery of the King 31 link (and associated employment development) of the proposed Grantham Southern Relief Road is uncertain.

In the light of the above, the Board agreed to prioritise the whole of the funding allocation to the full Grantham Southern Relief Road. This would enable the highest degree of support for the early delivery of a scheme that would support both employment and housing growth, whilst also relieving the town of A52 through traffic.

RESOLVED

That the Lincolnshire Strategic Transport Board prioritise the full £11.9 m funding allocation towards the proposed A52 Grantham Southern Relief Road.

13 GROWTH DEALS, STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLANS AND TRANSPORT

A paper was presented to the Board updating the position in respect of the new Strategic Economic Plans and Growth Deals through which funding for transport would be channelled from 2015/16 onwards. Further guidance was expected from DfT in due course, but the Local Enterprise Partnership was required to submit a draft Strategic Economic Plan to Government by the end of this year, with a final version due in March 2014. Funding would then be announced by Government in July 2014.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 3.35 pm.