



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 2.3

A141 Huntingdon and St Ives Strategic Outline Business Case

To:	Transport and Infrastructure Committee
Meeting Date:	12 January 2022
Public report:	Public Report
Lead Member:	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson
From:	Rowland Potter
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Recommendations:	<p>The Committee is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) note the St Ives study and progressb) note the A141 and St Ives option appraisal reportc) note the A141 and St Ives Strategic Outline Business Cased) Recommend the Combined Authority Board approve the development and costing up of the next stage of the project for Outline Business Case and Preliminary design.e) Recommend the Combined Authority Board approve the programme for, and costing up of, the Local Improvement schemes for St Ives.
Voting arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members present

1. Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to:
- Introduce and update on progress of the St Ives Study
 - Explain the progress and outcomes of the A141 and St Ives Strategic Outline Business Case
 - Discuss St Ives Local Improvement Schemes
 - Understand the proposed next stages to progress the project

2 Background

- 2.2 In April 2018, the A141 Huntingdon Capacity Study (commissioned by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) and the St Ives Area Transport Study (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council) commenced as a joint delivery study to consider the capacity challenges in the area
- 2.3 In March 2019, the Combined Authority subsequently approved the commissioning of a Huntingdon Third River Crossing feasibility study to also consider how that proposal might address the capacity challenges in the area.
- 2.4 Emerging findings from the A141 Huntingdon Capacity Study and St Ives Area Transport Study suggested that they needed to take into account the wider growth issues in the Huntingdon and St Ives area. It was therefore agreed by the January 2020 Transport and Infrastructure Committee and Combined Authority Board that this work be extended to include the Huntingdon Third River Crossing work.
- 2.5 The change to the study scope meant that it was necessary to compare the performance of the wider road network as a result of both schemes. The proposal for a Huntingdon Third River Crossing was therefore included within the traffic modelling and a high-level environmental desktop study for the area. The options compared included a bypass route for the A141 North of Huntingdon as well as the river crossing.
- 2.6 The outcomes of the study were reported at the August 2020 Combined Authority Board. Evidence demonstrated that an A141 bypass was the better performing option for addressing current and future congestion and growth and the Board decided to commission a Strategic Outline Business Case for that option. Atkins were subsequently engaged through a procurement exercise to undertake a Strategic Outline Business Case for that option.
- 2.7 In March 2021 the Combined Authority Board were presented with the St Ives Strategic Outline Business Case paper. This detailed that in August 2020 at the Board a decision was taken that £500,000 from the Capital budget will be allocated for developing a Strategic Outline Business Case for St Ives. This was to be spent and progressed by the Cambridgeshire County Council. Following discussions with the County Council the Combined Authority has decided that there is a better way forward to progress the work associated with St Ives. The project team have been able to find efficiency savings from our revenue budget to fund the St Ives study, which means we can commission the work directly from the Combined Authority.

2.8 In June 2021 the Board were presented with the latest update on the A141 Huntingdon Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) including a description of the SOBC and results on the public and stakeholder engagement

3 St Ives Study

- 3.1 Building upon the previous study work, an Existing Conditions Report has been prepared. The report presents the existing conditions for the St Ives, Houghton and Wyton area and comments on the future conditions following significant planned growth. It also sets out the strategic context and existing evidence base for the scheme. As a key town in Huntingdonshire, St Ives has and will continue to be a focus for housing, job and infrastructure growth. The town has strong economic connections to Huntingdon, Peterborough and Cambridge, as well as the other market towns within Huntingdonshire.
- 3.2 The most dominant mode for travel to work in St Ives is the car, and this dominance leads to congestion in the town and wider district. In particular, the A1123 and A1096 through the town are very busy routes with peak time congestion, leading to rat running through St Ives town centre. This in turn increases congestion and compromises bus services in this area.
- 3.3 The report documents the case for change for St Ives including
- Local policy documents identify the need to ensure that town centres retain their roles as the focus for local communities.
 - Significant development is proposed around Huntingdonshire up to 2036, particularly at Alconbury Weald, St Ives West and Gifford's Farm, increasing the demand for transport in the area.
 - The region has ambitious economic growth plans, centred around doubling the size of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough economy over 25 years.
 - St Ives clearly has a significant role to play in delivering growth in both housing and the economy. Improving transport connections and capacity will support growth in the region and provide greater opportunity to capitalise on the city's successful technology economy.
 - Local Plan growth can be accommodated on the local transport network through local junction improvements coupled with the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon scheme. However, there are ambitions for growth beyond this and there is the possibility of further major development sites becoming available, including RAF Wyton and Gifford's Farm, which would require further infrastructure measure to allow this growth to occur.
- 3.4 An Appraisal Specification Report has been written, this report provides the context for the appraisal to be undertaken and defines the scope, methodology and assumptions to be adopted in undertaking the modelling and appraisal. In summary, the report documents the proposed approach to the project and completing the SOBC.

Public Engagement

- 3.5 Public and Stakeholder Engagement was undertaken between 14th June and 5th July 2021. The engagement focused on current thoughts / opinions on the A141 as well as the initial options. In total, there were 469 responses to the survey.

- 3.6 51% of the respondents declared an interest in the area as a 'resident of St Ives, Houghton, Needingworth, etc'. Additionally, 'leisure walker' (24%), 'other' (7%) and 'commuter by car' (7%), and 'leisure cyclist' (5%) were the next most common responses. The majority of respondents indicated that they made trips within their local area by car/van (as the driver) (44%) and walking (36%). The next most popular mode was bicycle or e-bicycle (15%) with other modes capturing 2% or less.
- 3.7 Respondents were asked to rank five issues they are most concerned about in St Ives. The majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with the issues presented, with fewer respondents 'disagreeing' or 'strongly disagreeing'. The most common issues that respondents were the most concerned about were congestion (339), heavy traffic (269), and road safety (241). Fewer respondents, but still a significant number, agreed with improve air quality and improved journey times being concerning issues, (233) air quality and 193 journey times) as shown in Figure 1.

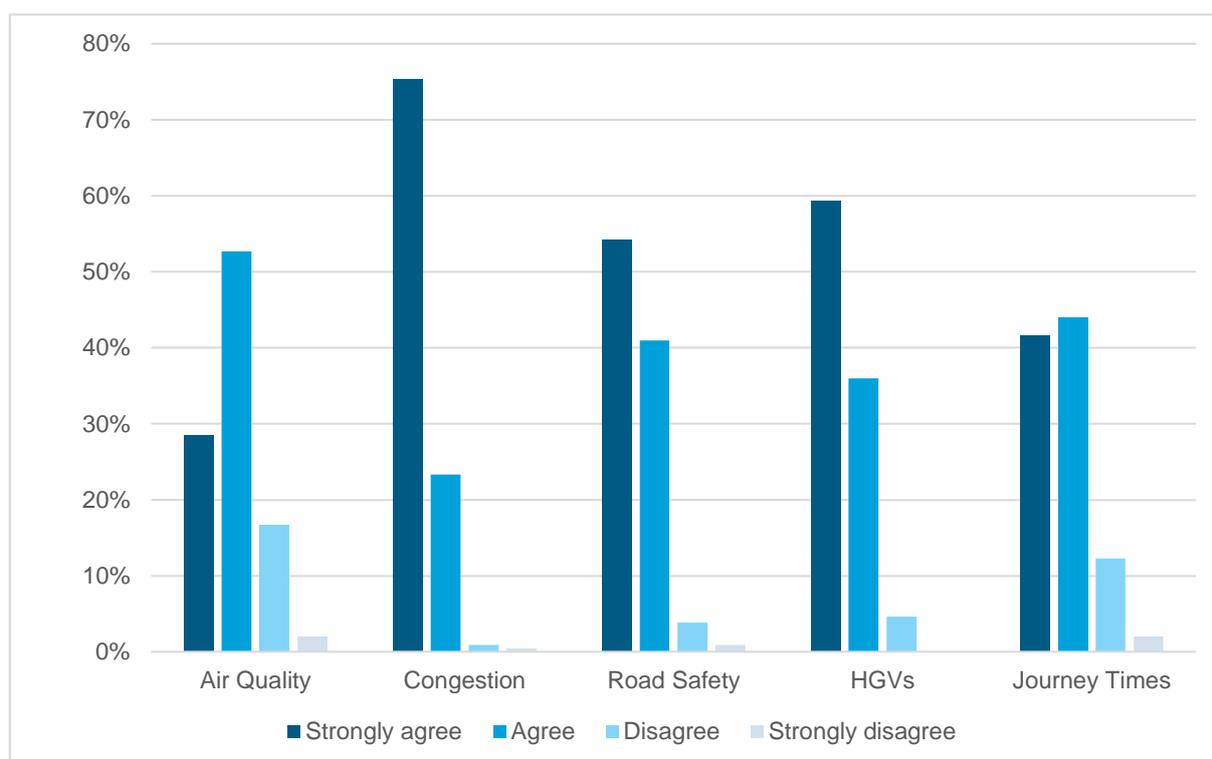


Figure 1 – Which issues around the A141 neighbourhood area you most concerned about?

- 3.8 In terms of what matters to the respondents in terms of future developments of their local transport network, the most common response was 'Very important' to all issues as shown in Figure 2.

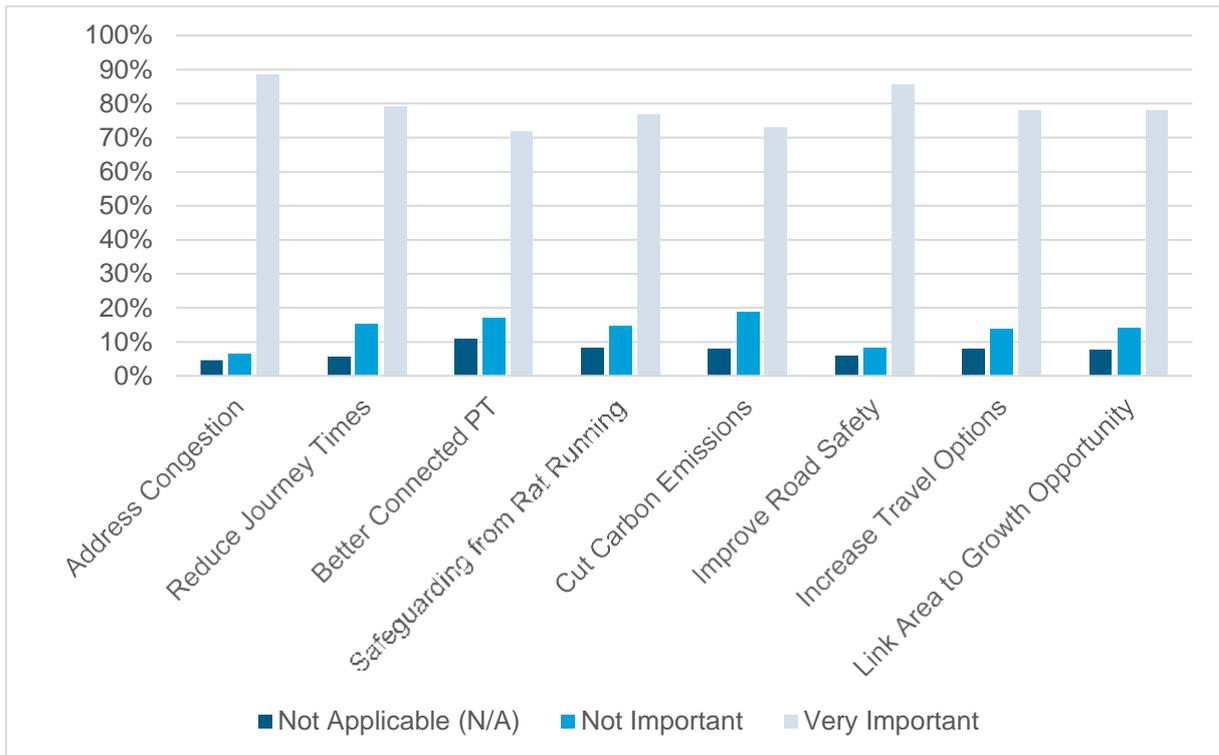


Figure 2 – What matters to you in future development of your local transport network?

- 3.9 Overall, when asked 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the need to reduce road traffic (cars, lorries, vans). Also, respondents would agree that there is a need to improve ease of bus and coach use, the results were distributed from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The most responses were provided for the 'agree' option (150), with slightly fewer responses for 'disagree' (128) and 'strongly agree' (116). Fewer respondents felt strongly about this issue, with only 116 responding 'strongly agree' and even fewer (59) responding 'strongly disagree'. Regarding, whether respondents would agree that there is a need to improve ease of minibus, taxi, minicab use, the results were skewed more towards 'disagree' (238) and 'strongly disagree' (123). Fewer respondents were in favour of this option with only 15 respondents 'strongly agreeing' and 57 respondents 'agreeing'.
- 3.10 Overall, most respondents were in agreement in the need to reduce road traffic. Respondents also agreed about reallocating road space to walking and cycling infrastructure. Fewer respondents felt that there was a need to reallocate road space to public transport as shown in Figure 3 and 4.

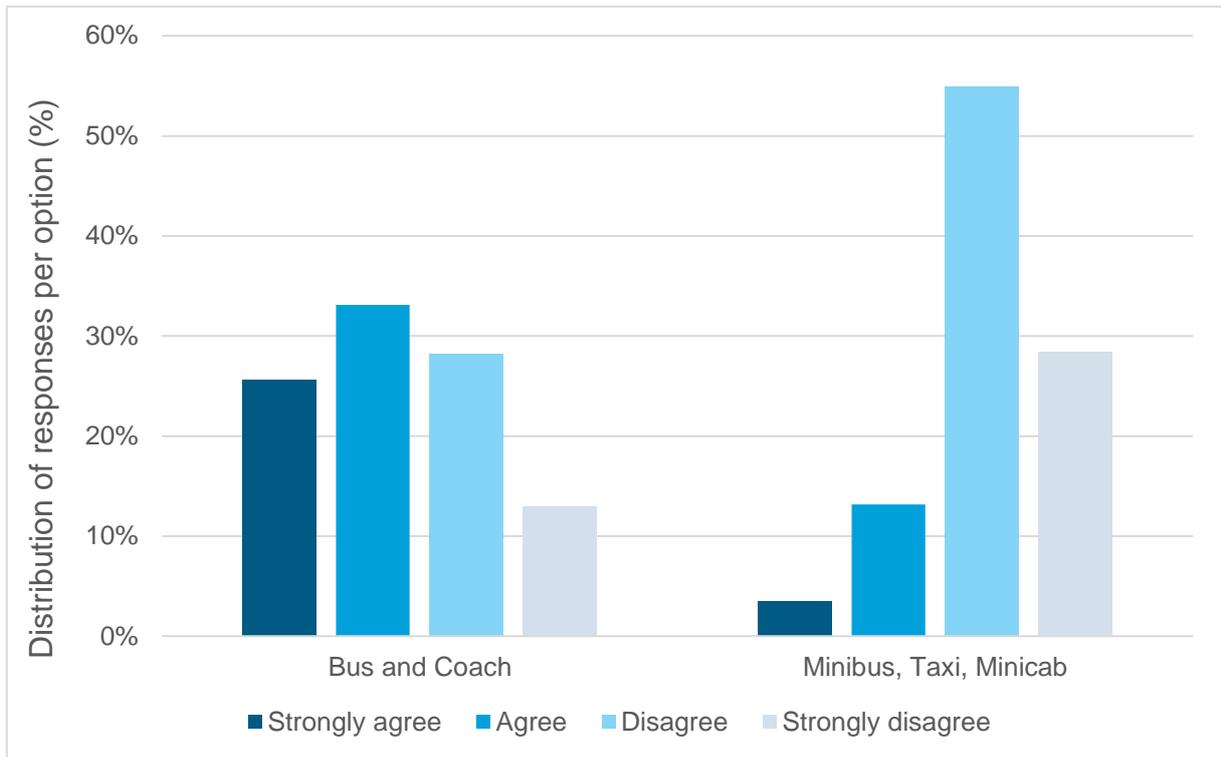


Figure 3 – To what extent do you agree there is a need to make travel by public transport easier in St Ives (bus, coach, taxi or minibus)?

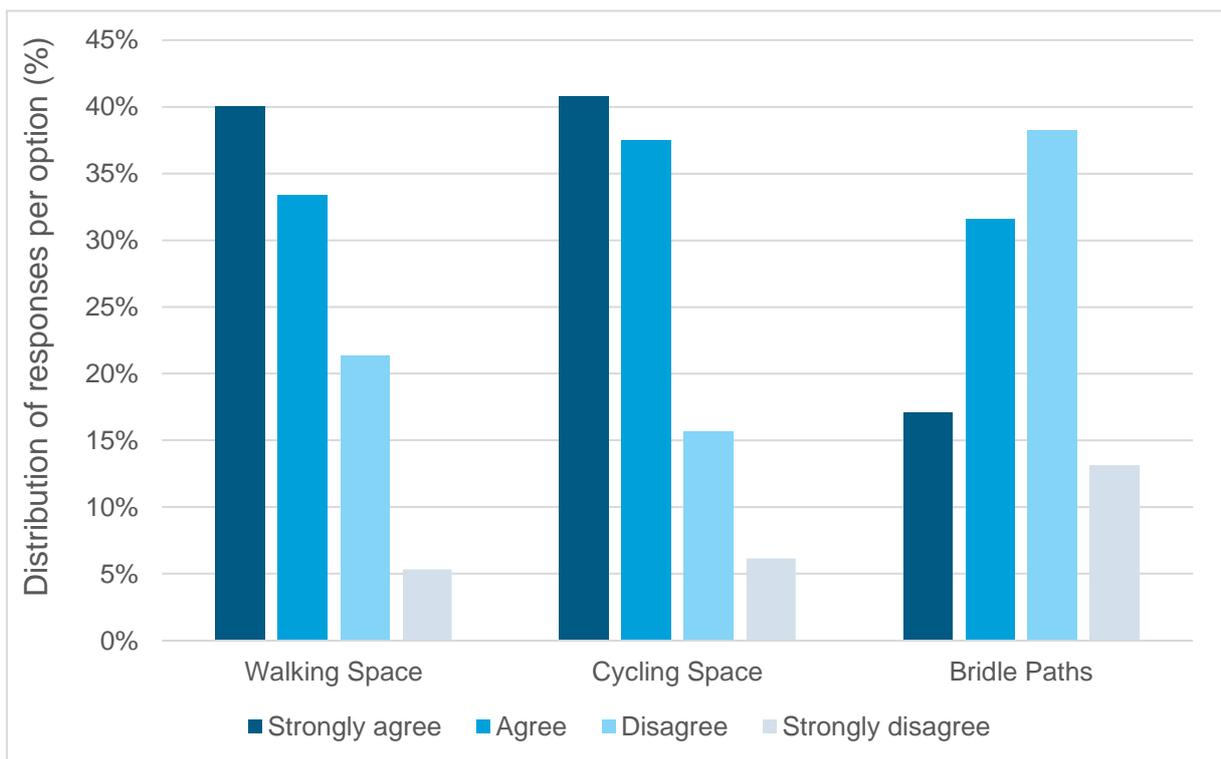


Figure 4 – To what extent do you agree there is a need to allocate road space for non-motorised users (walkers, cyclists and horse riders)?

3.11 The proposed options for the study area included:

- Option 1: Full offline bypass with no connections from A141 to A1123;
- Option 2: Full offline bypass with connections to Marley Road;
- Option 3: Offline bypass from A141 connecting to Marley Road. From the B1040, an offline link provided to connect to A1123;
- Option 4: Local Junction Improvement Package;
- Option 5: Sustainable Travel Package; and
- Option 6: Non-Motorised User Package.

3.12 Overall, respondents most favoured a bypass option with other sustainable / active travel options and Local Junction Improvements Packages. A combination of Option 1 and Option 4 being the most favourable as shown in Figure 5.

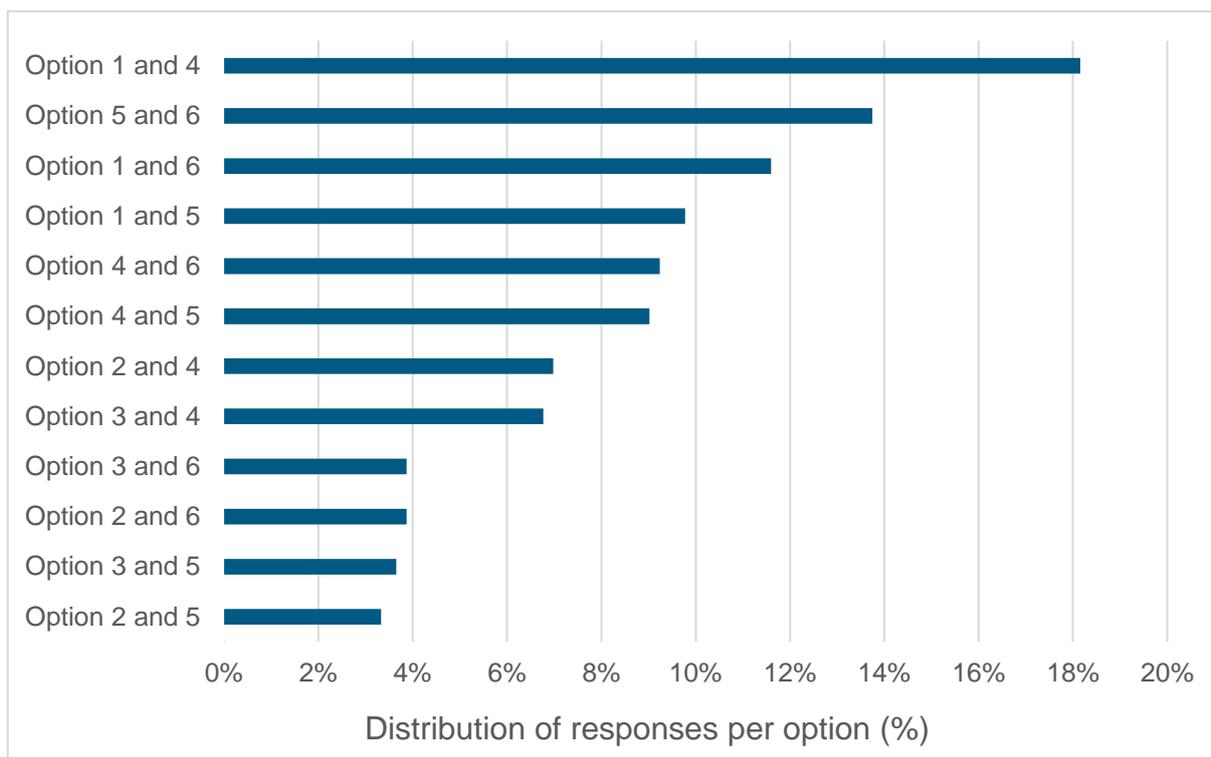


Figure 5 – Which combination of the option elements would you prefer to see considered further?

3.13 In summary the ‘comment drop on a map’ section of the engagement showed:

- Congestion - Congestion was frequently mentioned alongside concerns regarding the volume of commuters and heavy traffic travelling through the study area.
- Active Travel - Active travel comments were provided under a number of sub-themes, generally highlighting the need for improved and safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists between St Ives and surrounding areas.
- Environmental Impacts - A number of comments made by respondents were in relation to environmental factors. These were made in the context of flooding, pollution, noise and conserving green space within across the study area
- Development - Respondents noted their concerns with the increasing amount of development occurring in the study area and the subsequent impact of this upon the transport system
- Public Transport – a number of comments were made on public transport including more extensive services, priority and better funding.

- Safety - Numerous comments were made by respondents in relation to safety concerns within the study area for pedestrians and cyclists. This is generally in correlation with concerns regarding vehicle speed, visibility, crossings and the condition of active transport infrastructure
- Ratrunning - A number of respondents highlighted rat running and possible increase from new developments.

3.14 A Members Meeting was held, prior to the engagement period. In general, responses were consistent in that they did not think a bypass on its own would solve the problem at all or entirely. It should be noted that most comments stated that constructing a bypass (option 1, 2 or 3) would only have a positive impact on the transport network if considered in conjunction with the other options (4, 5 or 6). Most responses favoured bypass option 1 in conjunction with sustainable transport measures 5 and 6. However, it should be noted that some responses were sceptical as to whether a bypass, be that option 1, 2, or 3, would improve current transport issues or increase them. Instead respondents suggested there should be greater emphasis on assisting active transport mode users to encourage more people to use non-motorised modes of transport, thus reducing the need for a new bypass due to a reduction in motorised traffic on the roads.

Option Assessment Report (OAR)

3.15 Following the engagements an OAR was undertaken. The purpose of the OAR is to report on the previous stages of the project including initial Options Identification and Option Sifting and Engagement. The report then focuses on the Multi-Criteria Analysis Framework (MCAF) for the schemes. It then outlines the packages that will be taken forward for further analysis and reviewed in the Strategic Outline Case (SOC); formerly known as the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) as shown in Figure 6.

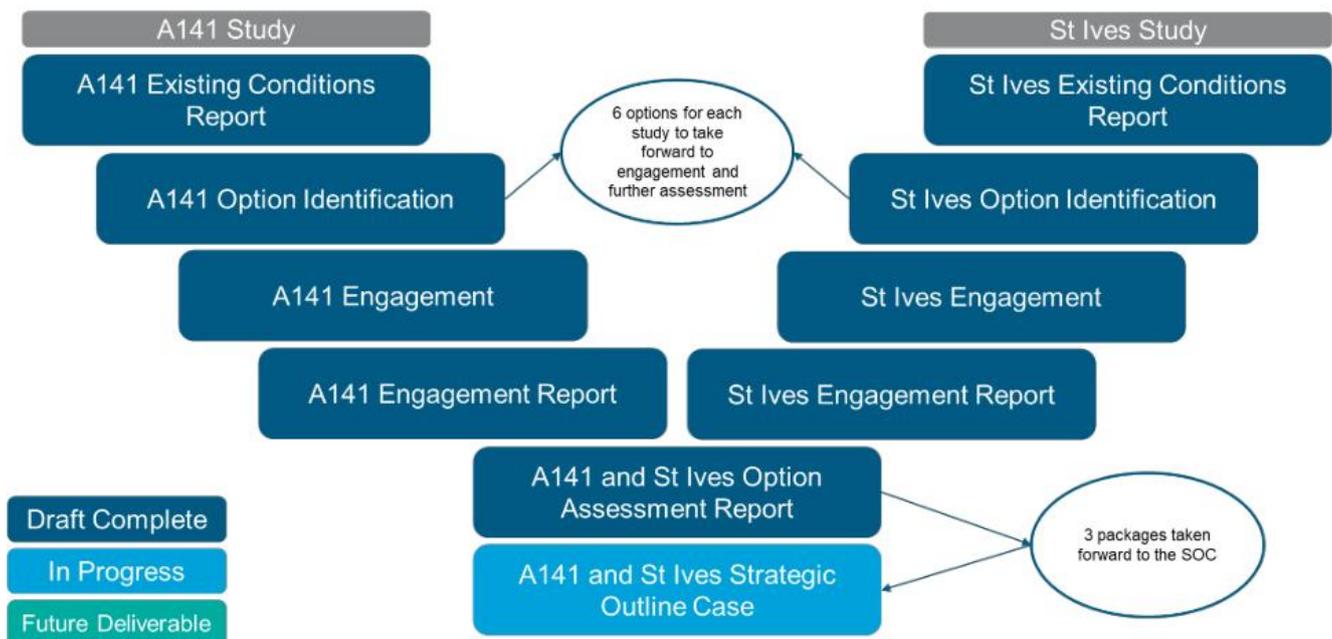


Figure 6 – Project Development

3.16 At this point in the study the A141 and St Ives projects have been aligned and bought together. This is due too:

- Either scheme having an impact on the other therefore one area cannot be focused on in isolation
- Both areas suffer from similar existing problems (as they are so closely linked)
- Both areas have similar future challenges so ideal to have a holistic solution.
- Both schemes are/were at a similar point in development following the initial Skanska work.

3.17 The MCAF considered all 12 options as presented at the engagement stage that best met the objectives and outcomes of the study. Based on a robust identification, sifting, engagement and assessment process, the better-performing options that were recommended to be progressed to SOBC stage are shown in Figures 7, 8 and 9.

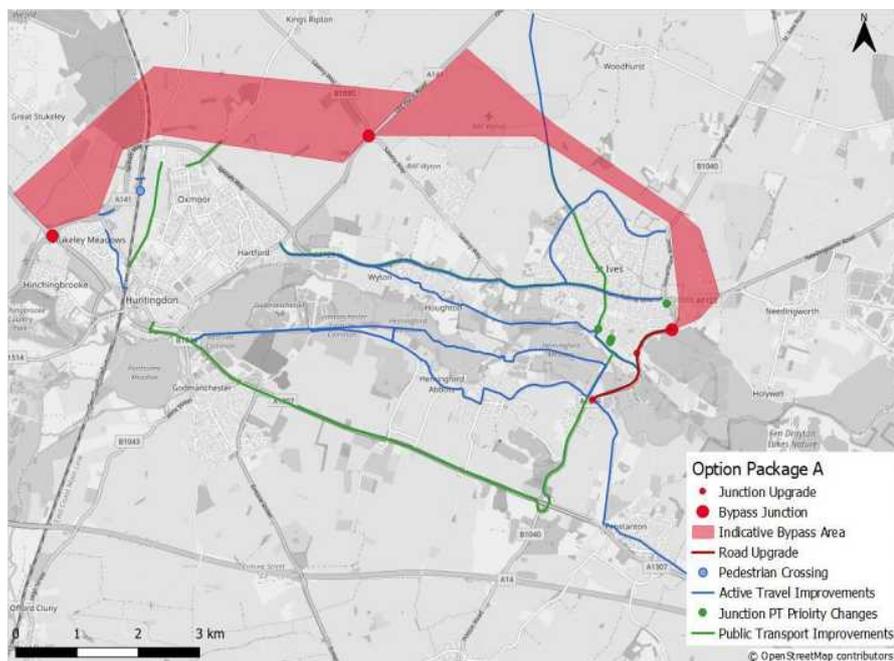
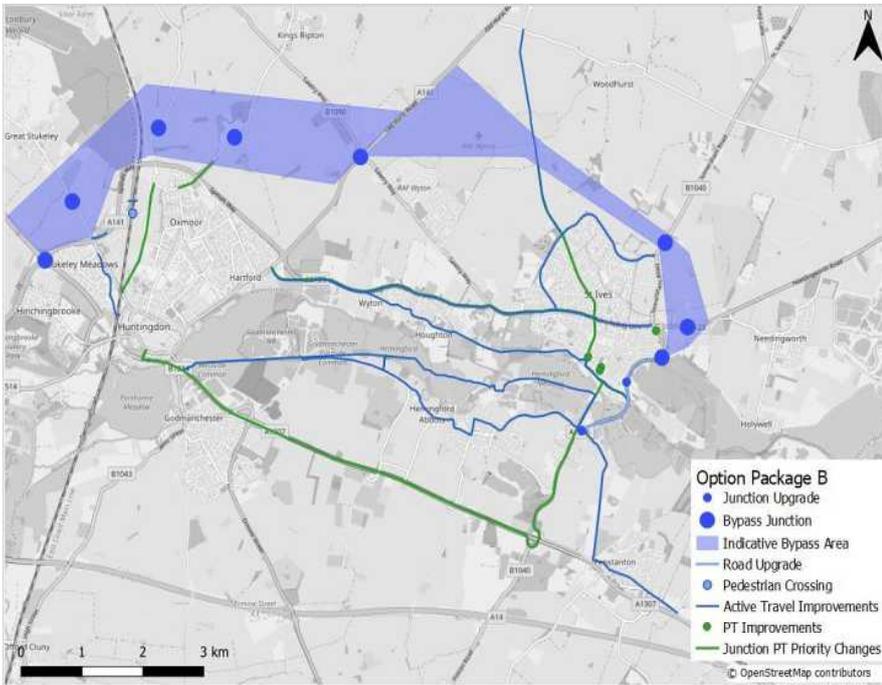


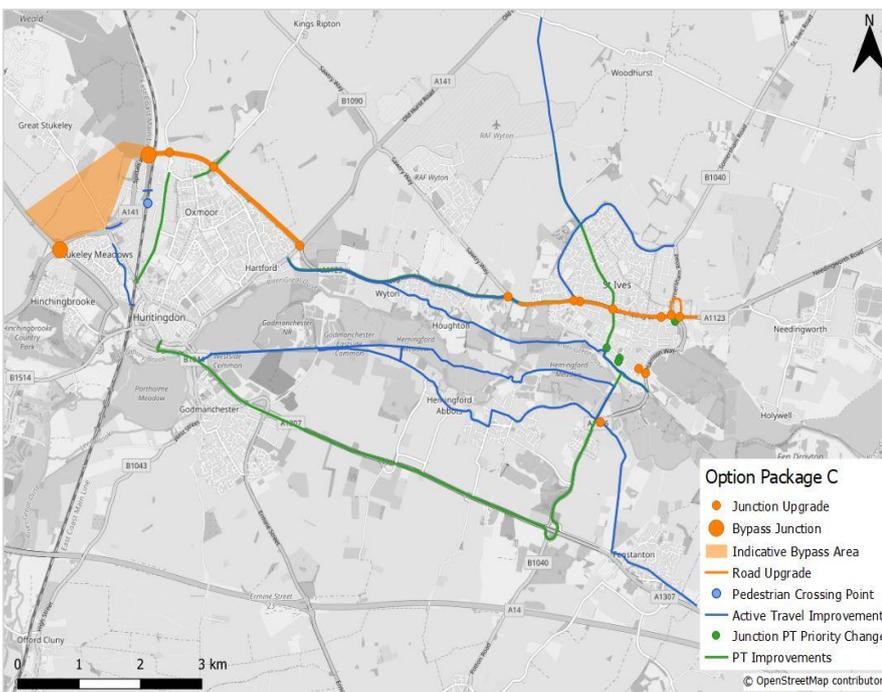
Figure 7 - Package A

- Bypass between Spittals and the A1096 with a junction with the existing A141 at the B1090 near RAF Wyton
- Extension to existing guided busway services
- New and improved active travel connections
- Junction and signal improvements in St Ives



- Bypass between Spittals and the A1096 with junction connections with existing roads
- Extension to existing guided busway services
- New and improved active travel connections
- Junction and signal improvements in St Ives
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Figure 8 - Package B



- Bypass of the A141 to the west of Huntingdon
- Widening of the A141 from Tesco roundabout to A1123 junction
- Extension to existing guided busway services
- New and improved active travel connections
- Junction and signal improvements in St Ives

Figure 9 - Package C

Strategic Outline Business Case (SOC)

3.18 The SOC is the first phase of the Business Case process. The SOC has been produced in accordance with the Department for Transport (DfT) three-phased decision-making procedure for investment in transport infrastructure. The SOC “establishes the potential scope of the transport proposal. This sets out the rationale for intervention (the case for change) and confirms how the investment will further the organisation’s priorities and wider government ambitions (the strategic fit) to determine the ‘preferred way forward’

- 3.19 A summary of the strategic dimension shows that the proposed upgrade to the Huntingdon and St Ives transport network aims to mitigate existing and future problems identified within the study area, namely highway network delays / congestion including rat running, lack of sustainable travel alternatives and the growth/development plans and aspirations within the study area. The option identification, sifting and assessment process undertaken as part of this Strategic Dimension identified the three potential scheme packages to be progressed including Package A, B and C as shown in Figure 7.8 and 9 respectively.
- 3.20 Overall, the economic dimension shows Packages A and B both perform strongly against the objective of addressing the current congestion on the network, with reduced level of delay, improved journey times and reductions in rat running. Package C does offer some improvements in this area, but to a much lesser extent. The additional connectivity offered in Package B enables this package to perform the strongest in this area, by enabling greater use of the bypass, providing greater second-order benefits of decongestion in other areas for those users remaining on the existing network. The bypass scheme has been flagged as a concern in regard to maintaining traffic levels at or below 2018 levels, as constructing a new highway may make private vehicle use more attractive than active travel and public transport. This should be looked at further as the scheme is developed to ensure that journeys that could be made by sustainable modes are not encouraged back to vehicle as a result of the attractiveness of the highway network. The current scheme packages do not intercept or substitute car trips with alternative transport modes however, they do decongest the current network and create an opportunity to achieve modal shift through the reallocation of road space and demand management through the planned additional developments.
- 3.21 The economic dimension explains the packages seek to contribute to the reduction of emissions to 'net-zero' by 2050, to minimise the impact of transport and travel on climate change. It is a concern that constructing a new bypass would lead to a reduction in active travel and public transport if reallocation of sustainable alternatives is insufficient, however the details show that traffic is being moved away from populated town centre areas and rural villages on to more strategic transport network infrastructure, which could lead to improved impacts on certain emission receptors. The additional connectivity in Package B also offers the best option to reduce vehicle mileage while still using the bypass. This needs to be considered further as the business case is developed, with more detailed environmental assessments undertaken. It should also be noted that the environmental impact during construction has not been considered at this stage however, given the nature of the infrastructure proposed, the environmental impact of the construction phase also needs to be considered further at the OBC stage. It is anticipated that package C would have lower impact than Package A and B due to the lower level of construction required.
- 3.22 The best performing of the packages is Package B, which yields a BCR of 1.74. As this value is between 1.5 and 2, it has a 'Medium' Value for Money (VfM) category. It generates most of its benefits through economic efficiency benefits, but also has a positive effect on accidents and greenhouse gases. Package A yields a BCR of 1.34, which falls into the 'Low' VfM category as the BCR is between 1 and 1.5. It generates most of its benefits through economic efficiency, but has a negative effect on accidents and greenhouse gases. Package C is the worst performing of the packages, yielding a BCR of 0.13. this is classified as 'Poor' VfM as its' BCR is less than 1.
- 3.23 The financial dimension shows in the SOC that a high-level initial capital cost has been calculated for each scheme. This will be looked at in more detail as the project progresses through the Business Case stages.

- 3.24 The commercial dimension of the SOC demonstrates that the package of schemes is commercially viable. Routes to procurement available include the Eastern Highways Alliance Framework 3, Standalone – ‘Find a Tender’ service; the existing Cambridgeshire Highways Services Contract; and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Professional Services Framework. The preferred procurement strategy and sourcing options will be developed during the next stage of the project.
- 3.25 The management dimension demonstrates that the package of schemes is deliverable. The CPCA is responsible for the development and the delivery of the Huntingdon and St Ives Transport Study Scheme. To progress the project onto the next stage collaboration with CCC is necessary.
- 3.26 The overall conclusion of the SOC is that there is a case to progress the project to Outline Business Case. Further investigation into Option A, B or a combination of these might yield the best outcome – or even a further alternative as well as other sustainable options that could compliment the scheme. An independent review of the business case was undertaken of the SOC. Confirmed a number of areas that will require more detail for example maintenance/renewals costs at OBC stage that may influence the VfM. This will be worked up at OBC stage.

Next Steps

- 3.27 The next steps of the study include collaboration with CCC for the commencement of the development of programme and cost for the next stage of the project for Outline Business Case and Preliminary design. Following this the programme of Outline Business Case includes further investigation Option A, B, combination of both or a further alternative scheme, engagement, surveys, Outline Business Case process, preliminary design and consultation. This work would be expected to last 18 to 24 months approximately. Though during this period there would be phased realises of information at defined points.

St Ives Local Improvements

- 3.28 Delivery of the St Ives Package of highway improvements identified in the A141 and St Ives Transport Study Options Appraisal Report dated 2020. Comprising highway works to change junction priorities, introduce a 20mph limit, and parking restrictions, bus stop improvements, walking and cycling wayfinding. Development (design only) of a network of NMU investment based on the findings of the St Ives Strategic Study. To progress the project onto the next stage collaboration with CCC is necessary and a proposal, cost and programme will be developed to bring forward to Committee and Board to drawdown the funds and commence the schemes as soon as possible.

4 Significant Implications

- 4.1 None

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The next stage of work is developing the scope and cost of the OBC, this will be done utilising the in-house Transport team so has no direct financial implications. Once the scope and cost for the OBC development have been established the proposal to fund the development will be brought back to the Committee and Board for consideration.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 None

5. Other Significant Implications

5.1 None

6. Appendices

6.1 None

7. Background Papers

[Combined Authority Board report 14th July 2020](#)

[Combined Authority Board report 6th January 2020](#)

A141 Huntingdon Northern Bypass Existing Conditions Report 3.0.pdf

St Ives Transport Study Existing Conditions Report v2.0.pdf

A141 Huntingdon Northern Bypass Engagement Report v2.0.pdf

St Ives Transport Study Engagement Report v2.0.pdf

Huntingdon and St Ives Transport Study_OAR_v.1.0.pdf

Huntingdon and St Ives SOC.pdf

