



<b>TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No: 2.7</b>
<b>6 MARCH 2020</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

## **ELY AREA CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 This report presents a summary of the work undertaken on the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement project to date, potential outcomes, and next steps.

<b><u>DECISION REQUIRED</u></b>	
<b>Lead Member:</b>	<b>Mayor James Palmer</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>Director of Delivery &amp; Strategy Paul Raynes</b>
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
The Transport and Infrastructure Committee is recommended to:  (a) Note this progress report; (b) Give officers any necessary guidance on further engagement with Network Rail and other partners about this scheme; (c) Express a view on the objectives for any further funding for this project from the Combined Authority's budget in 2020-21.	<b>Voting arrangements</b>  Simple majority of all Members

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Governance of the delivery of this project is undertaken in the form of:
- (a) A Task Force comprising funding members including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership and Strategic Freight Management (DfT representing the freight industry) plus non funding partners to include Norfolk and Cambridgeshire County Councils, West Suffolk Council, and representatives from the passenger and freight rail companies;
  - (b) A Programme Board comprising the funding partners, the programme Board instructs the DfT as Sponsor on the funders wishes in relation to the production of the business case.

2.2. The rail network within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority region is considerably constrained due to the complex issues at Ely north and Ely Station, which include the need for:

- (a) Improvement to structures to allow the removal of speed restrictions through Ely;
- (b) Layout changes at Ely station;
- (c) Signalling headway reductions, particularly for freight;
- (d) Traction power upgrades;
- (e) Interventions at the level crossings at Queen Adelaide and Kiln Lane;
- (f) Improvements to other level crossings around Ely.
- (g) Improvement to a significant number of rail crossings (specifically at Queen Adelaide and Kiln Road), some of which have safety concerns and so speed limits as low as 20mph are set.

2.3. There have been numerous historical studies in relation to the corridors that include Ely Junction, but to date none have developed into physical improvement delivery.

2.4. The Combined Authority's objectives are:

- (a) To ensure access is maintained for residents at Queen Adelaide in any resulting solutions.
- (b) To support solutions that enable increased track speed
- (c) To support the upgrading of structures, track and signalling to modern standard.
- (d) To enable additional freight and passenger services between Peterborough and Cambridge
- (e) to enable additional stopping services at Whittlesea, March and Manea
- (f) To increase the number of passenger services at all stations throughout the 24 hour period

### **3.0 PROGRESS TO DATE**

- 3.1. The governance of work on Ely Junction is complex. While Network Rail are being funded by the Combined Authority and other partners to undertake work on the scheme, they are by the Department for Transport. The Combined Authority commissioned additional work which Network Rail have now integrated into Network Rail's programme.
- 3.2. Network Rail under instruction from a programme board composed of the funding partners including Combined Authority, Greater Anglia LEP, SFM (DfT representing Freight), have been undertaking a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to:
  - (a) Identify and understand the challenges
  - (b) To identify opportunities and consider options to resolve
  - (c) Economic review to establish the potential benefits
  - (d) Understand the technical challenges and establish cost estimates
  - (e) Produce an SOBC with options for improvement and economic case to support this.

The Combined Authority's financial contribution to this work is set at £3.3m. The programme has been put back by Network Rail at DfT's request, so that the original reporting date of September 2019 has been moved to March 2020.

- 3.3. In addition, the Combined Authority produced an SOBC for the Queen Adelaide area to consider the current road and rail crossings to the Peterborough, Kings Lynn and Norwich Lines.
- 3.4. In July 2019, the Department for Transport approved £200 million as additional investment to improvements to the Ely Area to be delivered within the Control Period 6 (CP6) ending in 2024, Network Rail are considering the best use of this funding as advanced activity to any outcome proposals from the SOBC. This is additional funding to that which is proposed in the business case to unlock the additional train paths.
- 3.5. In October 2019, a commitment was made within Rail Network Enhancement Project (RNEP) report to progress the scheme from SOBC and into detailed design and Outline Business Case stage to improve both passenger and freight capacity through Ely. No corresponding commitment to fund delivery of the improvements identified in the SOBC has been made.

### **4.0 POTENTIAL OUTCOMES**

- 4.1. There is current capacity through the Ely Area for:
  - (a) 8.5 Train Paths Per Hour peak period
  - (b) 6.5 Train Paths Per Hour off peak period.

This is currently being fully utilised, with 127 train movements per day. This is therefore a constraint on the Combined Authority's aim of increasing the

frequency of trains in the area, and of providing an adequate service on a restored Wisbech to Cambridge route.

4.2. The current study is likely to propose enhancements that will:

- (a) increase to 11 Train Paths Per Hour (all day) of which 8 are passenger and 3 are freight
- (b) with further potential for 14 Train Paths Per Hour (all day) 11 are passenger and 3 freight

4.3. Within the 14 train paths per hour (all day), the Peterborough to Cambridge route is likely to benefit from:

- (a) An additional 0.5 train paths per hour Peterborough to Ipswich service, serving Peterborough, March.
- (b) An additional 1 train path per hour on the Peterborough to Cambridge service serving Peterborough, March, Ely, Cambridge.
- (c) An additional 1tph Norwich to Nottingham service, serving Ely, March, Peterborough
- (d) An additional 1 tph Norwich to Cambridge service, serving Ely, Cambridge.
- (e) An additional 1 tph Kings Cross to Kings Lynn service, serving Ely, Cambridge.
- (f) Potential for 1 to 2 train paths per hour on the March (Wisbech) to Cambridge service.

4.4. These improvements are likely to be expensive. If it could be assumed that the £200 million already committed by DfT to early delivery of the SOBC outcomes were all spent on increasing capacity – we are advised that additional funding of up to £251million would be required to deliver the 11 trains per hour and up to an additional £351million to deliver the 14 tph.

4.5. The SOBC on road/rail crossings at Queen Adelaide commissioned by the Combined Authority, which has already been completed, identifies solutions that would ensure residents continued to be able to travel by road between Queen Adelaide and Ely. These solutions are likely to cost in the region of £96.5m million.

## **5.0 NEXT STEPS**

5.1. We await the publication of the current business case and DfT decision over the coming few months.

5.2. It is estimated that the next stage of business case development will require an additional £13.1m, it is not clear at this stage if the Combined Authority is being requested to support this with a further contribution.

5.3. The task force is developing a letter for local MPs to lobby government to ensure the programme is maintained and where possible accelerated.

- 5.4. As previously stated in this report, any enhancements within this project are likely to be enablers to further growth, but significant investment is required on improving the line between Peterborough and Cambridge to truly unlock the benefits, to maximise the 11 to 14 tph.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE**

- 6.1. The Committee is invited to note the content of this report and to advise on any further matters that it wishes officers to raise with Network Rail and other partners.
- 6.2. It is critical for Rail to be considered as any part of the Combined Authority's future integrated transport solution particularly in the north of the region and Ely is a key to unlocking this.
- 6.3. The Combined Authority as a major funder of this project, led by with the Mayor, continues to lobby for rail improvements along this corridor and especially at Ely.
- 6.4. The combined authority continues to stress the need to maintain access for the residents at Queen Adelaide.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The current funding of £3.3 million was originally approved by the LEP, now the Business Board. Actual costs as at end of November 2019 were £1.16 million, because of the delay to Network Rail's work identified at paragraph 3.2 above.
- 7.2. The MTFP includes a further £4.1 million, which is still subject to Board approval. The Committee may wish to consider how to ensure that further CA funding of this scheme can most effectively ensure that it focusses on benefits for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority region.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct legal implications at this stage

## **9.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. None

## **10.0 APPENDICES**

- 10.1. None

<u>Source Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>
1. RNEP Autumn update	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-network-enhancements-pipeline-autumn-2019-update">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rail-network-enhancements-pipeline-autumn-2019-update</a>