



TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No: 2.8
07 NOVEMBER 2019	PUBLIC REPORT

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 and outlines the next steps and decision points that are planned.

<u>DECISION REQUIRED</u>	
Lead Member:	James Palmer, Mayor
Lead Officer:	Paul Raynes, Director of Delivery & Strategy
Forward Plan Ref: N/A	Key Decision: No
The Transport and Infrastructure Committee is recommended to: (a) Note this progress report (b) Advise on any issues requiring escalation to the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement Programme Board.	Voting arrangements Simple majority of all Members

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The rail network within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) area is considerably constrained due to the complex issues at Ely.

These include:

- (a) four significant rail routes converge
- Peterborough to Cambridge
 - Kings Lynn to Cambridge

- Norwich to Cambridge
 - Ipswich / Felixstowe to Cambridge
- (b) 126 identified crossings across these routes, including complex challenges at Kiln Lane and Queen Adelaide
- (c) outdated signalling
- (d) outdated infrastructure, including bridge crossings and track
- (e) reduced track speeds

2.2. There have been numerous historical studies in relation to the corridors that include Ely Junction, but to date, none have developed to deliver actual improvements. This project is not identified as a key project in the Combined Authority's Business Plan 2019-20.

3.0 Progress to date

- 3.1. In March 2017 the former Local Enterprise Partnership approved the engagement of Network Rail as a joint funder with New Anglian LEP and SFM to deliver a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to identify the constraints to rail capacity in the Ely area and to identify options to unlock these constraints.
- 3.2. The Business Board is now accountable for funding the project. The Transport Committee should, however, be sighted on the project and may wish to make recommendations to the Business Board.
- 3.3. Network Rail, under instruction from the funder programme board and Department for Transport (DfT), have been undertaking an SOBC to:
- (a) identify and understand the challenges
 - (b) identify opportunities and consider options to resolve
 - (c) establish the potential benefits through an economic review
 - (d) understand the technical challenges and establish cost estimates
 - (e) produce an SOBC with options for improvement and economic case to support this.
- 3.4. In addition to the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements SOBC, which is restricted to rail issues, the CPCA approved the production of an SOBC for the Queen Adelaide area to consider the current road and rail crossings to the Peterborough, Kings Lynn and Norwich Lines. This SOBC has been completed and has been issued to Network Rail for consideration in the Ely Area study.
- 3.5. In July 2019, the DfT also advised that the Secretary of State at the time had authorised £200m for improvements at Ely Junction to identify improvements to be delivered within the Control Period 6 (CP6) which concludes at the end of the 2023/24 period. Initially, it appeared that DfT regarded this as a financial cap on the scope of the SOBC. Following challenge by the Mayor and at officer level, DfT have said that this £200m is a separate workstream to the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements programme of activity. It is not yet clear, however, how that workstream and the SOBC are related.

- 3.6. In October 2019, the government published the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline Autumn 2019 update. A commitment is made within this report to progress the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements scheme from SOBC and into detailed design and Outline Business Case stage to improve both passenger and freight capacity through Ely. [No budget has so far been set].

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1. The Ely Area Capacity Enhancements Task Force Group and Programme Board meet regularly to review progress and agree next steps. As the SOBC is still being developed, the OBC programme is yet to be finalised. In broad terms the programme is expected to be:
- (a) SOBC to complete Quarter 4 2019/20
 - (b) OBC to commence Quarter 1 2020/21
 - (c) Public information exhibitions Quarters 1 / 2 2020/21
 - (d) Public consultation Quarter 3 2020/21 and then again Quarters 3 / 4 2021/22
 - (e) Between now and Quarter 1 2021 / 22, there will likely be survey activity in the area establishing environmental and ground condition data.
- 4.2. The additional £200m workstream will run alongside the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement work. The Minister has recently confirmed that both strands of work will form the subject of a single funding decision in Spring 2020.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE

- 5.1. The Transport Committee is invited to note the content of this report and to advise on any further matters that it wishes escalated to the Ely Area Enhancement Programme Board. In particular, the Committee may want to seek greater clarity about the relationship between the SOBC work and the DfT-mandated package of work for Control Period 6.
- 5.2. It should also be noted that the CPCA, as a major funder of this project, have stressed their desire for the SOBC to consider the wider regional and national importance of unlocking the constraints to passenger and freight capacity, and the Mayor recently wrote to the Rail Minister expressing the need for this complex issue to be resolved.
- 5.3. The CPCA has taken the view that access for residents at Queen Adelaide will need to be maintained whatever solutions may be considered for the three rail crossings, and that this is a condition of continued CPCA support for the work.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications at this stage

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no legal implications at this stage

8.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

8.1. None

9.0 APPENDICES

9.1. None

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