



<b>TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No: 2.7</b>
<b>4 NOVEMBER 2020</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

## **A47 DUALLING**

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1. To update the Committee on discussions with Highways England on the A47 Dualling project to date and outline proposed next steps.

<b><u>DECISION REQUIRED</u></b>	
<b>Lead Member:</b>	<b>James Palmer, Mayor</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>Paul Raynes, Strategy and Delivery Director</b>
<b>Forward Plan Ref: N/A</b>	<b>Key Decision: N/A</b>
The Transport and Infrastructure Committee is recommended to:  (a) Note the content of this report and proposed next steps	<b>Voting arrangements</b>  Simple majority of all Members

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. The Mayor, Combined Authority and partner organisations have long recognised the strategic importance of the A47 to the regional and national economy. The Mayor has committed to a number of ambitious and strategic transport improvements including the dualling of the A47.
- 2.2. This scheme provides:
- (a) vital connectivity to the north of the Combined Authority area and will complement other Combined Authority transport and infrastructure

priorities such as Wisbech Rail and the development of a new Garden Town at Wisbech.

- (b) route enhancement that is anticipated to stimulate economic growth in the north of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region, notably in housing, education, employment and the agri-tech economy.
  - (c) a safer strategic route offering improved journey times and journey time reliability as incidents can be better handled by reducing diversion route lengths.
- 2.3. The Combined Authority Board, in June 2017, commissioned the development of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and Options Appraisal Report (OAR) for the dualling of the A47 between Thorney and Walton Highways.
  - 2.4. The OAR which assessed the shortlisted 12 route options, recommended three identified route options to be considered for further development and future consultation.
  - 2.5. Combined Authority Board approval was given in June 2018 to commence the procurement of the next stage of the project and engage with the Department for Transport (DfT).
  - 2.6. In July 2018, the Mayor met the Chief Executive of Highways England who welcomed the proposals and approved engagement with his wider team, to seek to establish these proposals within the Highways England Roads Investment Strategy 2 (RIS 2) period for development and design, with a view to construction commencing in early RIS 3 (post-2025).
  - 2.7. Engagement with Highways England and DfT established that for the scheme to be considered for inclusion in the RIS 2 period for development and design, the project would need to comply with the Highways England Project Control Framework (PCF) Stage 0. Moreover, the project would then be required to be independently reviewed via the Highways England Stage Gate Assessment Review (SGAR).
  - 2.8. In collaboration with Highways England, the PCF 0 documents were produced and underwent the SGAR, successfully achieving a Green status in December 2019.
  - 2.9. On 6 March 2020 an update on the A47 Dualling was presented to the Transport and Infrastructure Committee which highlighted the differing cost estimates, with Highways England estimating significantly higher costs. This is because Highways England is required to include standalone flood mitigation cost within its estimate. We believe, however, that the flood barrier or barrage north of Wisbech, currently being explored by Anglian Water as part of their water management plans, will change the flood risk designation of the area and obviate the need to include standalone flood mitigation costs within the estimates for the A47 project.

### **3.0 Progress to Date and Next Steps**

- 3.1. In March, Highways England published the RIS 2 and in August its Delivery Plan 2020-2025. Disappointingly, these documents did not include the A47.
- 3.2. Officers have continued to engage with Highways England to progress the scheme. As a result, Highways England has agreed to take forward renewed work on the A47 with a view to reconsidering its inclusion in the RIS programme. Those discussions have focussed on cost, and on the approach to flooding mitigation.
- 3.3. Highways England have suggested that this renewed work is undertaken by them with the Combined Authority as a co-sponsor on the project board. This – unusual - integrated approach would ensure the Combined Authority continues to have a key role in progressing the project, while also bringing the scheme for the first time into Highway England’s work programme.
- 3.4. Highways England are open to funding the review. Discussions about the detail of this continue.
- 3.5. The Mayor is seeking a Ministerial meeting with Baroness Vere to emphasise the need for improving the A47 between Peterborough and the Walton Highway.
- 3.6. The Combined Authority has made representation to the Treasury as part of our Spending Review submission. This included a case for funding the A47 dualling as a priority.

### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. None at this time, but confirmation is being sought from Highways England about funding the potential targeted updating of the PCF 0 products.

### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. The recommendations accord with CPCA’s powers under Part 3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017 (SI 2017/251).
- 5.2. The meeting shall be conducted in accordance with Parts 2 and 3 of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings)(England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

### **6.0 OTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. None at this time

## 7.0 APPENDICES

- 7.1. Appendix 1 – A47 Strategic Outline Business Case
- 7.2. Appendix 2 – A47 Options Assessment Report

<b><u>Background Documents</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>
Transport and Infrastructure Committee 6 March 2020	<a href="#"><u>Transport and Infrastructure Committee 6 March 2020</u></a>
CA Board June 2017	<a href="#"><u>CA Board June 2017</u></a>
CA Board June 2019	<a href="#"><u>CA Board June 2018</u></a>