

A46 Member Partnership
Tuesday 4th June 2019
14:00-16:00

Leicestershire County Council, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8RA

Members: Cllr Adrian Hardman (Chair), Wychavon District Council
Cllr Mark Cargill (Vice Chair), Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Cllr Jeff Clarke, Warwickshire County Council
Cllr Heather Timms, Warwickshire County Council
Cllr David Bill MBE, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Cllr Patrick Molyneux, Gloucestershire County Council

LEPs: Michael Warner (MW), GFirst LEP

Officers: Adrian Hart (AH), Warwickshire County Council
Shawn Riley (SR), Wychavon District Council
Amanda Lawson-Smith (ALS), Gloucestershire County Council
Robert Weaver (RW), Tewkesbury Borough Council
Andy Baker (AB), Worcestershire County Council
Jeremy Williamson (JW), Cheltenham Borough Council
Rob Thornhill (RT), Harborough District Council
John Careford (JC), Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Mark Palfreyman (MP), Leicestershire County Council
Andy Yeomanson (AY), Leicestershire County Council
Cat Hartley (CT), Blaby District Council
Stuart Maxwell (SM), Leicester City Council
Helen Nightingale (HN), Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Highways
England: Eri Wong (EW), Asset Manager - Coventry & Warwickshire

Speakers: Rachel Mullarkey (RM), Highways England
Peter Smith (PS), Highways England
Harry Sadleir (HS), Db Symmetry
Rory McHugh (RMc), Hydrock
Simon Statham (SS), Midlands Connect

Apologies: Cllr Lynden Stowe, Gloucestershire County Council
Cllr Ken Pollock, Worcestershire County Council
Cllr Vernon Smith, Tewkesbury Borough Council
Cllr Andrew McKinlay, Cheltenham Borough Council
Neil Hopwood (NH), GFirst LEP
Cllr Christine Radford, Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Sheila Scott, Blaby District Council
Cllr Philip King, Harborough District Council
Cllr David Welsh, Coventry City Council
John Seddon, Coventry City Council
Nick Dauncey, Warwickshire County Council
Luke Willetts (LW), Worcestershire LEP

Item 1 – Introductions and Apologies (Chair)

Cllr Hardman welcomed attendees to the meeting. Introductions and apologies were as recorded above.

Item 2 – Membership of the Partnership (Chair)

AH confirmed that invitations had now been sent to six local authorities who have expressed interest in joining the Partnership, these being Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, Melton Borough, Charnwood Borough, Blaby District and Harborough District.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, Blaby District, Harborough District Charnwood Borough and Melton Borough Councils have formally responded and are now members of the Partnership.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council are yet to respond **[Action: AH to follow this up with NBBC]**.

Item 3 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising (Chair)

The minutes were agreed for uploading onto the A46 Partnership website **[Action AH/ALS]**.

Item 4 - M40/M42 Interchange Smart Motorways (Highways England)

RM and PS gave a presentation on Highways England's planned M40/M42 Interchange Smart Motorways scheme, which seeks to increase capacity and improve journey time reliability on the south-east quadrant of the Birmingham Motorway Box (M5/M6/M42).

The link, in both directions, between M42 J3 and J3a are listed as being the 8th and 9th least reliable journey times on the entire London to Scotland West Route (1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013).

The current arrangement of M42 J3a does not have the capacity to meet the current peak demand.

The scheme involves the introduction of Smart Motorway technology to monitor and manage traffic flow. This includes converting the existing hard shoulders to live traffic lanes, provision of a number of new gantries, emergency relief areas, a concrete central safety barrier, CCTV and automatic stopped vehicle detection, plus upgrading a number of underbridges to provide the necessary additional width.

Construction of the scheme will commence in March 2020. The scheme completion date is yet to be determined. HE is assessing the impact of other schemes in the area and will look to programme the works with consideration of these schemes e.g. HS2, M42 J3, M42 J6, Coventry City of Culture in 2021 and the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

The scheme completion date will be announced later this year by DfT as part of the RIS2 plan.

PS presented a video showing the overnight removal of a bridge on the M6 between J13-J14, to demonstrate how much effort Highways England will go to keep the motorway open during the daytime.

Cllr Clarke asked if diversion routes would be required for the works to be carried out and if HE had taken into account other programmed works in the Warwickshire area, such as the Binley and Stoneleigh schemes on the A46.

RM said that traffic diversion routes would need to be put in place but these would be restricted to overnight. The scheme would be planned and coordinated with other works in the area to avoid conflicts where possible.

Cllr Cargill was pleased to see that low-noise surfacing would be used and asked if this was now the standard road surface for Highways England.

PS replied that low noise surfacing is used where appropriate and when it is practical to do so. Due to its higher life-cycle costs it tends to be used sparingly, mainly on sections of carriageway near built up areas.

Item 5 - Hinckley Strategic Rail freight Interchange (DB Symmetry)

HS from Db Symmetry and RMc from Hydrock transport consultants gave a presentation on the proposed Strategic Rail freight Interchange (SRFI) near Hinckley.

HS began and said that the scheme has been classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and planning permission is being sought through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process under the 2008 Planning Act.

The proposed SRFI site would be part of a global supply chain link directly to the expanding manufacturing industry within the west and east midlands and would primarily support Automotive industries in the area, e.g. Triumph.

HS explained how a SRFI would support local aspirations for growth and that a network of SRFI's is backed by Central Government Policy and cited in their National Policy Statement for National Networks (December 2014), as '*a key element in aiding the transfer of freight from road to rail, supporting sustainable distribution and rail freight growth*'.

The Hinckley SRFI will be located within Blaby District, 3km north-east of Hinckley and adjacent to M69 Junction 2. It would sit on the Strategic Railfreight Network (W10 Gauge), providing connectivity to Felixstowe, London, Southampton, Liverpool, Humber Ports and Scotland.

RMc described how the transport impact of the proposals are being assessed and set out some of the emerging findings from the modelling work currently being undertaken.

Leicestershire County Council's Pan Regional Transport Model (PRTM) is being used to assess the impact of the site and to test mitigation options. A number of scenarios are being tested, with and without southbound slip roads at M69 J2. Further scenarios for off-site infrastructure are also being considered.

Emerging outputs from PRTM indicate that the development proposals could provide 'betterment' on the Strategic Road Network, including the A5. Further work was needed however to consider the potential impact of the development on villages to the east of the site.

PRTM scenario modelling and discussions with Highway Authorities are still on-going with regards to junction capacity and off-site highways mitigation requirements. Engagement has taken place to date with Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire County Councils, Leicester, Coventry and Derby City Councils and Highways England.

The proposals are currently at a pre-app stage. A package of highway mitigation is to be finalised later in the year, with formal statutory consultation in November/December 2019 and submission of the DCO Application in June 2020. Db Symmetry is targeting 2022/2023 for the delivery of the southbound M69 J2 slip roads followed by a further 8 years for the delivery of site.

Cllr Clarke asked what modelling has taken place around rail capacity. HS replied that their modelling work did take into account predicted passenger usage on the line and they had been in discussions with Network Rail and Midlands Connect with regards to future passenger and freight assumptions.

Cllr Clarke also raised his concerns about the potential additional traffic on the single carriageway section of the A5 near M69 J1, particularly as there is further growth planned for that corridor. RMc explained that they were in discussions with Highway England and Warwickshire County Council with regards to the impact on the A5 in this area. Emerging outputs from PRTM indicate a redistribution of traffic from M69 J1 to J2.

Cllr Bill expressed further concerns about the impact of the development on the A5 and more locally within Burbage and Hinckley.

Cllr Timms also had concerns over the A5 and the questioned suggestions that a number of sections of the A5 (e.g. Smockington Hollow) would see positive impacts and 'betterment'.

HS pointed out that the 'betterment' referred to in the presentation was in relation to a comparison of the future performance of the network with and without the development, it did not relate to betterment of the existing network performance. Cllr Timms queried whether the impacts of HGVs on local roads would be considered and addressed. HS said that Db symmetry were considering camera enforcement as part of their mitigation package.

Item 6 - Garden Town/Garden Village Update (RW/CH)

The Group received a presentation from RW from Tewkesbury Borough Council on the proposals for a Garden Town at Tewkesbury/Ashchurch.

Tewkesbury Borough Council is one of a number of local authorities who have been awarded 'Garden Town' status and received initial funding for project development.

RW explained that the Garden Town project provided the opportunity to deliver strategic level infrastructure and meet the Borough's housing needs up to 2041 and beyond.

The proposed new Garden Town would have a complementary role to the town of Tewkesbury and be designed and planned with the engagement and involvement of the existing local community. From a transport perspective it would look to maximise its strategic rail location.

The Borough Council is currently in discussions with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to determine how the proposed Garden Town will be mapped out, including governance arrangements, infrastructure delivery and engagement.

The group also received an update from CH from Blaby District Council on the proposals for a Garden Village between M1 J21 and J20.

CH explained that there are two strands to the development; (1) 3,500 dwelling 'Garden Village' and associated employment and (2) a new motorway junction (M1 J20A) between J21 and J20.

The proposals are at an early stage and will be considered along with other options in the District Council's next Local Plan. Following initial expressions of interest, Government would be making an announcement later in Summer 2019.

CH mentioned that Leicestershire County Council is currently working with Midlands Connect to prepare a business case to DfT for Large Local Major funding to develop proposals for M1 J20A.

Cllr Bill asked if the Garden Village was dependent on re-routing the A46 to the south and south-east of Leicester. CH replied that the Garden Village was not dependent on this.

Item 7 – Trans-Midlands Trade Corridor Proposition (SS)

AH gave a brief update on the recent work which has been undertaken with Midlands Connect, before SS provided a more detailed context on the key asks and offer of the proposition.

Cllr Cargill referred to a number of local improvements that he felt were necessary on the A46 between Stratford-upon-Avon and Alcester and the difficulties he had faced trying to seek commitment from Highways England to address these issues.

Clr Bill asked if Midlands Connect had given equal weight to the existing A46 route north of Leicester. SS explained that Midlands Connect were looking at all options and would make recommendations based on the right choice for strategic movements. AH pointed out that the proposition would not make specific reference to schemes.

Members were asked to continue to discuss the proposition internally with a view to hopefully signing up more formally before the document is submitted to Government in July. SS agreed to share a further iteration of the proposition with AH to circulate to the officer group [**Action: SS/AH**].

Item 8 – Midlands Connect Update (SS)

SS provided the group with an update on the Major Road Network and Large Local Major programme development. SS said that Midlands Connect is currently considering the submission of 7 MRN and 4 LLM schemes to DfT. The schemes will be presented for endorsement at Midlands Connect Strategic Board later in June.

Item 9 - Highways England Update (EW)

EW reported that colleagues in the Strategy & Planning team have developed the draft Strategic Business Plan, which has been submitted to the Office of Rail and Road for efficiency review. The outcome of this review will be made as advice from the ORR to the Secretary of State. Subject to SoS approval, the DfT will publish the final Road Investment Strategy and shortly after this Highways England will publish the Strategic Business Plan. This is expected to be towards the end of 2019.

Item 10 - Mapping of Planned Housing and Employment Growth (AH)

AH explained that the maps officers produced on behalf of the Partnership, which show housing and employment sites along the A46 corridor, would be updated when housing completion figures are produced in August/September. Officers will bring an update to the next members meeting in October.

AH noted that other organisations such as Midlands Connect also produce similar plans and therefore officers would look for opportunities to share information and avoid duplication.

Item 11 - A46 Action Plan/A46 Corridor Local Plan and SEP Updates (AH)

Item deferred to the next meeting.

Item 12 - Media Issues (Chair)

Media issues, including comms and lobbying around the Partnership's revised Prospectus is still to be determined pending development of the TMTC proposition. This item is covered under Item 7 (see above).

Item 13 - Future Items (Chair)

- a. A46 Strategic Corridor Study Phase 2
- b. A46 Stoneleigh Improvements
- c. A46 Walsgrave junction improvements
- d. 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games Transport Plan

AH asked for any further suggestions.

Item 14 - AOB

PS thanked the Partnership for the opportunity to present the M40/M42 Interchange Smart Motorway proposals

Cllr Hardman thanked Leicestershire County Council for hosting the meeting.

Date and Venue of Next Meeting:

2nd October 2019, 2-4pm, Wychavon District Council