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**Directorate:** Place and Sustainability

**Service:** Asst Director - Project Delivery

**Team:** Asst Director - Project Delivery

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**Proposal being assessed:** March Area Transport Programme

**Business plan proposal number:**

**Key service delivery objectives and outcomes :** The Fenland Local Plan adopted in May 2014 includes proposals for 4,200 new homes in March and 30 hectares of employment land to deliver around 2,000 new jobs up to 2031, with strategic allocations for development being to the southeast and southwest of the town centre. Funding was allocated by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to develop the preliminary designs and an Outline Business Case for the March Area Transport Study (MATS); this work was completed and approved by the Combined Authority in 2021. The Full Business Case (FBC) is presented in three phases, with each phase focusing on the delivery of different schemes from the overall MATS package. Each phase presents the case for investment for the whole package, confirming the strategic benefits associated with delivering all five schemes, as well as demonstrating that the funding for each phase will deliver value and benefits. FBC 2 focuses on A141 / Peas Hill Roundabout, A141 / Hostmoor Avenue, A141 / Twenty Foot Road and B1101 High Street / St Peter's Road. The MATS FBC2 schemes will significantly reduce traffic congestion along the A141, B1101, and B1099 and help free up highway capacity to accommodate housing and employment growth across March. The schemes will also reduce the need for strategic traffic to route through the town centre and improve the town centre experience. The reduction in traffic congestion will subsequently reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions as demonstrated in the Economic Dimension. They will also address existing safety issues at the A141 / Twenty Foot Road junction. The Hostmoor Avenue and Peas Hill Roundabout schemes include

improvements for pedestrians, and the Northern Industrial Link Road (NILR) scheme proposes to include segregated cycleway facilities.

**What is the proposal:** The combined authority has allocated £7m funding within their Medium-term Financial Plan which was approved by CPCA Board in November 2023. This funding allocation will allow a sub-package of the FBC2 schemes to be taken forward. It is proposed, subject to approval by Committee, that construction schemes for Twenty Foot Road and St Peter's Road junctions will be taken forward and that the Full Business Case (3) for the Northern Industrial Link Road will be developed. The B1101 High Street / B1099 St Peter's Road scheme is an upgrade to the traffic signal control junction to include a separate northbound right turn lane on the B1101 The Causeway approach. The A141/ Twenty Foot Road Junction scheme is to upgrade the existing priority junction to a signalised junction, with a northbound right turn flare on the A141 Isle of Ely Way northbound approach.

**What information did you use to assess who would be affected by this proposal?:** The Equality Impact Assessment has been informed by the Full Business Case 2, which includes policy study, traffic assessments and detailed design. The business case has been developed in line with HM Treasury's Green Book and revisions to the Green Book have been taken into consideration throughout the development of the MATS Improvement Schemes. The content of the Business Case aligns with the latest Green Book guidance (October 2023) to ensure that the refinement of preferred schemes is undertaken as part of a balanced appraisal process, and not solely based on the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) value. The assessment also considers data from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Insight.

**Are there any gaps in the information you used to assess who would be affected by this proposal?:** No

**Does the proposal cover:** All service users/customers/service provision in specific areas/for specific categories of user

**Which particular employee groups/service user groups will be affected by this proposal?:** The proposals will predominately affect residents and businesses within March, and those visiting the area. There is an established need to address existing traffic congestion and road safety issues at a number of locations in and around March, as evidenced by historical studies of traffic and transport conditions within the town and work undertaken for the current MATS project. As part of the public engagement process to devise the March: Market Town Masterplan, residents consistently identified traffic congestion as one of the main issues in the town. It is expected that the journey time benefits resulting from the schemes will have direct benefits for local bus services. However, the MATS Improvement Schemes will not reduce the walk distance to bus stops and therefore residents outside of a 300m distance from their nearest bus stop will not see a change in walking distances as a result of these schemes. Without intervention, forecast growth is expected to exacerbate existing issues of congestion and queueing along Broad Street, having an adverse impact on residents and compromising the sustainability of further long-term growth in the town. Improvements

along the A141 will help alleviate pressure on the town centre and help support a more walkable and cyclable highway environment in this location.

**Does the proposal relate to the equality objectives set by the Council's EDI Strategy?:** Yes

**Will people with particular protected characteristics or people experiencing socio-economic inequalities be over/under represented in affected groups:** About in line with the population

**Does the proposal relate to services that have been identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics/who are experiencing socio-economic inequalities?:** No

**Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?:** Don't know

**What is the significance of the impact on affected persons?:** The proposed schemes for the March Area Transport Programme are anticipated to produce a range of benefits for people travelling around March including improved journey reliability, reduced congestion and improved road safety. The scheme will deliver significant transport user, noise, greenhouse gas, air quality, and accident benefits. The benefit cost ratio is considered conservative as it is only based on the scheme benefits that can be monetised. Other scheme benefits relating to improved townscape, severance, personal affordability for income deprived groups, and journey quality are anticipated from the delivery of MATS FBC2 Package of schemes. The MATS schemes support the inclusion of active travel aspirations including segregated cycleway facilities along the Northern Industrial Link Road. The FBC2 schemes will provide improvements for pedestrians including a controlled crossing at Hostmoor Avenue and zebra crossing as part of the Peas Hill Roundabout scheme. Alongside MATS, a number of cycling and walking schemes have been implemented with funding provided by the combined authority, including improvement works alongside further detailed design and options studies. Delivery of these active travel 'quick wins' were approved by committee in September 2020.

**Category of the work being planned:** Project

**Is it foreseeable that people from any protected characteristic group(s) or people experiencing socio-economic inequalities will be impacted by the implementation of this proposal (including during the change management process)?:** No

**Age:** The proposed measures will apply to all drivers and their passengers, including public transport, travelling around March irrespective of age of either the driver, subject to them holding appropriate licence, or passengers. Improvements to pedestrian crossing facilities will bring improvements available to all those needing to access the junction and surrounding road network.

**Disability:** Improvements to crossings, including an upgraded signalised crossing at St Peter's Road junction and proposed new signalised crossing at Hostmoor Avenue and

Pea's Hill Roundabout, will provide reduce pedestrian severance and improve crossing facilities for those with disabilities. The St Peter's Road Crossing upgrade includes a 3.2m wide toucan crossing and resurfacing of the footway. The new crossing proposed at the Hostmoor Avenue junction is a controlled crossing with refuge island. Specific design features at the crossings include dropped kerbs and tactile paving, which provide easy access for wheelchair users and people with walking difficulties. Further consideration will be given to the impact during construction in consultation with the appointed contractor, to minimise disruption during the works and ensure safe access is maintained where possible.

**Gender reassignment:**

The proposals will have no specific impacts on gender reassignment.

**Marriage and civil partnership:** The proposals will have no specific impacts on marriage and civil partnership.

**Pregnancy and maternity:** The proposals will have no specific impacts on pregnancy and maternity.

**Race:** The proposals will have no specific impacts on race.

**Religion or belief (including no belief):** The proposals will have no specific impacts on religion or belief.

**Sex:** The proposals will have no specific impacts on sex.

**Sexual orientation:** The proposals will have no specific impacts on sexual orientation.

**Socio-economic inequalities:** The proposals will have no specific impacts on socio-economic inequalities.

**Head of service:** Michael Williams

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**Confirmation:** I confirm that this HoS is correct

**Status:** Approved