

Report Title: March Area Transport Study Broad Street Element

To: Highway and Transport Committee

Meeting Date: 26th April 2022

From: Steve Cox, Executive Director, Place and Economy

Electoral division(s): March North and Waldersey

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2022/58

Outcome: To report progress of the March Area Transport Study Broad Street element and seek approval to the recommendations below to enable the project to progress to design and construction aligned with the March Future High Street project timeline constraints

Recommendation: That the committee

- a. notes progress to date;
- b. the Council agrees to accept £3,780,387 of funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to allow construction of the Broad Street element which is integral with delivery of the March Future High Street public realm project;
- c. delegates a Decision to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to the Director of Highways and Transport; and
- d. delegates a Decision to Award and enter into a construction contract for the construction works from an existing framework or open procurement process to the Director of Highways and Transport to enable the construction of the Broad Street element to commence from early 2023.

Officer contact:

Name: Leon Scholtz
Post: Interim Project Delivery Team Leader
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Member contacts:

Names: Cllr Peter McDonald / Cllr Gerri Bird
Post: Chair/Vice-Chair
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1. Background

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Funding was allocated from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) to develop the preliminary designs and an Outline Business Case for the March Area Transport Study (MATS); this work has been completed and approved by the CPCA in 2021.
- 1.3 The MATS Outline Business Case was presented to the 4th of November 2021 Highways and Transport Committee meeting seeking approval to move to the next phase of scheme development, Detailed Design and Full Business Case. This approval and funding from the CPCA for the delivery of the Detailed Design and Full Business Case was granted, and the phase has now begun.
- 1.4 The approved MATS Outline Business Case is based upon the delivery of a package of five schemes, comprising of works at:
 - Broad Street (including the Dartford Road junction)
 - St Peter's Road (junction between High Street and St Peter's Road)
 - Twenty Foot Road (Twenty Foot Road approach to and junction with March Road)
 - Peas Hill (Peas Hill and Hostmoor Avenue junction with Wisbech Road)
 - Northern Link Road (Hundred Road and Longhill Road including connection of the two)
- 1.5 Fenland District Council (FDC) are also funding improvements to the March Town centre and the broader public realm of Broad Street through the March Future High Street Fund (FHSF) project. The MATS and March FHSF designs on Broad Street have been aligned to ensure that the schemes deliver a joined-up approach to the benefit of the town centre and community.
- 1.6 To enable the delivery of the March FHSF within the timescales applicable to that funding, which requires full expenditure by March 2024, early release of the funding to construct MATS Broad Street has been sought from the CPCA. It is proposed that the Council accept this funding from the CPCA to enable the MATS Broad Street project to be constructed and facilitate the delivery of the March FHSF public realm improvements within the funding constraints present on that project.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The MATS Broad Street and March FHSF scheme both impact the Broad Street area of March town centre with MATS Broad Street affecting the physical layout of the roads through the area providing a re-apportionment of carriageway space and public realm space.
- 2.2 The revised carriageway alignment through the MATS Broad Street works will increase the area available for public realm in Broad Street, which the March FHSF project will capitalise on, by providing an improved public realm. The MATS Broad Street design is in development, taking into account the March FHSF preliminary design. The layout can be

2.8. This is based upon the current project budget forecasts indicated in the following table:

Item	Value
Design and Site Investigation	£265,786.70
Project Delivery (Management and Supervision)	£545,393.10
Land and Legal	£25,000.00
Statutory Undertakers	£500,000.00
Construction	£2,098,913.00
CCC Risk	£419,699.38
Inflation	£313,486.95
TOTAL	£4,168,279.13

The £4,168,278.13 above takes account of an additional £387,891 funding allocation made by the CPCA following the approval of the MATS OBC late 2021, to undertake the MATS Broad Street Detailed Design.

2.9 Key risks relating to the project at this time are:

- a) Construction cost estimates and utility protection and /or diversion cost estimates – the Business Case Report is based upon cost estimates for construction and not on contractual Target Costs or utility company diversion estimates, although risk and inflation has been included to mitigate this cost risk;
- b) Impact of COVID, Brexit, lack of supply chain exacerbated by the conflict in the Ukraine on construction – potential to be a significant resource, material, construction cost and programme risk;
- c) Mobilisation – upon confirmation to commence construction it is approximately four weeks programmed for mobilisation which is very challenging for the supply chain;
- d) Long lead items – items cannot be ordered until instructed to commence and may potentially delay the overall programme;
- e) Delayed Grant Funding Agreement between the Council and the CPCA may impact the overall MATS programme and affect the commencement of the Broad Street project which would impact on the March FHSP;

2.10 The project governance will be consistent with other projects being delivered by the Council. This will consist of a Project Board where the Council are the “Delivery Agent” and the Project Sponsor are the CPCA. Fenland District Council are also represented, who are leading the stakeholder engagements with local Members, business and residents for the Future High Street Fund Project. A good working relationship has been established between the three parties. The risks are managed through project governance, where the Council are the Delivery Agent and the CPCA are the Project Sponsors (funders), who make the key decisions and hold the financial and programme risks.

2.11 For the programmes to be maintained and delivered on time meeting the March 2024 spend deadline for the Future High Street Funding criteria, all parties including the Council, FDC the CPCA and stakeholders need to be aware of the significant challenges with delivering to the challenging programme. Prompt decisions are required and some design work will be required to be taken at risk, while consultation and engagement is undertaken in parallel.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

The primary focus of MATS is to enable growth in the study area. This is for both housing and employment growth as identified in the Fenland Local Plan (2014), which would be to the benefit of the local community. The Broad Street scheme is central to this, creating a more inviting environment for members of public whilst supporting use of the town centre and the businesses situated there.

3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

MATS will improve access in the study area which will assist with providing better links to employment, health and education and the Broad Street project form part of this strategy. Throughout the design, the principles in DfT's "Gear Change – A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking" will be applied where practical, to promote modal shift and support pedestrians and cyclist users in the area.

3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

The MATS Broad project, in combination with the March FHSF projects, will assist with making March Town centre a more pleasant place for children to visit which will be less dominated by car traffic.

3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

The aspiration to improve public realm on Broad Street could promote modal shift away from car use with associated benefits in air quality.

3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

There are no significant implications within this category.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

Resources have been made available to deliver these projects within defined budgets.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

A procurement strategy is being agreed between the project team and the Procurement Team for delivery of the construction phase. This strategy will ensure full compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

A Grant Funding Agreement between the Council and CPCA are being developed. The MATS Broad Street project will be managed using established governance and risk management to ensure compliance, programme and delivering the project within approved budgets.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The Equality Impact Assessment screening process during the Outline Business Case phase indicated no potential negative impact and this will be further assessed and monitored during the Full Business Case stage. Equality Impact Assessments for both projects are being developed whilst stakeholders and impacted groups are engaged throughout the process.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

Following the consultation that was undertaken during the Outline Business Case phase, further engagement will be undertaken during the Full Business Case phase.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

Local Members have been involved in MATS via regular Local Member Steering Group meetings throughout development.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications in this category.

4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Status: Neutral

Explanation: The proposed scheme will not impact on any buildings

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Status: Negative

Explanation: The proposed schemes are aimed at reducing delays and improving safety locally. Vehicle emissions should be reduced by minimising time spent in queues, but the proposals will not encourage shift to lower carbon vehicles. There is also the possibility that through making roads more attractive to drivers this may encourage increased private vehicle use. The proposed improvements to walking and cycling currently being examined should encourage some users to walk and cycle more regularly

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Status: Neutral

Explanation: The Broad Street project is a reconfiguration of existing highway and paved areas and with now impact on existing green spaces.

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Status: Neutral

Explanation: The schemes will produce waste during the construction phases, however any impact will be minimised by the choice of construction materials and maximising opportunities for recycling, including aggregates, concrete and re-use of bituminous material. Further where suitable as the end product, existing materials will be retained within the schemes.

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Status: Neutral

Explanation: The proposed Broad Street Project are not anticipated to affect water use.

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Status: Positive

Explanation: Air pollution is expected to be improved by the proposed MATS schemes as time for traffic spend in queues will reduce.

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Status: Neutral

Explanation: No expected impact

The contacts for the sign off process are as follows:

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Elsa Evans

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes

Name of Officer: Sarah Silk

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Sue Proctor

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Kate Parker

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer? Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents

5.1 Source documents

- Fenland Local Plan (adopted May 2014) - <https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/15057/Adopted-Local-Plan>
- March Area Transport Study (MATS) Outline Business Case (OBC) - <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-funding-bids-and-studies/march-transport-study>

Appendix A: MATS Broad Street layout, with the March FHSF project incorporated.



