

WISBECH ACCESS STUDY GROWTH DEAL FUNDED STUDIES

To: **Local Transport Body Board**
From **LTB Steering Group (Jack Eagle)**
Date: **15 December 2014**

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report seeks to update Members on two transport studies that are underway for the Wisbech area, and seeks views on another proposal which is due be procured shortly.
- 1.2 The studies are to be funded from Growth Deal funding awarded for 2015/16. However in order to expedite matters, Cambridgeshire County Council is forward funding these studies to allow work to start sooner.
- 1.3 £1m has been allocated to Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP from 2015/16 to 2016/17 to support the development of a package of measures to support growth and regeneration, improve accessibility and address congestion in and around the town of Wisbech. Government will provide up to a further £10.5m for scheme delivery for the Wisbech Access Strategy, on condition that the development work results in an acceptable and deliverable package of transport measures. It should be noted that DfT has confirmed that the £1m funding is committed and that partners can proceed with the work using their own funding on the basis that this funding is now committed.

2 A47 THORNEY TO WISBECH WALTON HIGHWAY – INITIAL OPTIONS ASSESSMENTS

- 2.1 Skanska has recently been appointed to carry out this piece of work which is to investigate potential high level options for improvements to the A47 between Thorney and Wisbech and the economic benefits that these improvements may bring.
- 2.2 The study will conclude by the end of January 2015 and cost approximately £27k. The study will be used to inform the Wisbech Access study as options on the A47 will influence the traffic flow in the town.

3 MARCH TO WISBECH RAIL BUSINESS CASE AND GRIP2 STUDY

- 3.1 Mott MacDonald have recently been appointed (subject to contract) to carry out March to Wisbech Rail Business Case work and the GRIP2 study. This work will cost approximately £100k.
- 3.2 There are three main parts of this study:
 - Strategic Outline Business Case conclude January 2015
 - GRIP2 study conclude March 2015

- Outline Business Case conclude mid May 2015

3.3 As part of the above work a stakeholder workshop is taking place on 7 January 2015 and invitations have recently been sent out. Depending on the outcome of this study work and funding availability, the scheme is expected to continue to be developed through the Network Rail GRIP process.

4 WISBECH ACCESS STUDY

Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The main aims of the Wisbech Access Study is to develop more detail around the major schemes of the Cambridgeshire Long Term Transport Strategy and the Wisbech Transport Study which will help relieve congestion in Wisbech and facilitate growth and regeneration. A brief for the Study has been developed in partnership with Fenland District Council. The aim of this is to ensure a good understanding of the issues and options for tackling congestion and improving strategic transport infrastructure in Wisbech, building on previous work. The study will consider options for reducing congestion in the town to support housing and employment growth, taking account of sustainable transport needs.
- 4.2 The access study will consider in more detail feasibility of the individual schemes and ensure options work together as a package and will provide information on the phasing of options. This will also include the impact of the wider transport network including the A47 and investigations into reopening the railway. The ultimate output will be an Outline Business Case which includes a package of preferred options. The aim being to ensure that this results in a package of deliverable proposals which tackle congestion, improve accessibility and support growth to help secure the £10.5m of funding provisionally allocated to support scheme delivery in and around Wisbech.
- 4.3 The study will take into account recent studies and documents that have been produced including: the Fenland Local Plan, The Cambridgeshire Long Term Transport Strategy, The Wisbech Town Market Town Transport Strategy and the Wisbech Area Transport Study and Mitigation Strategy.

Outcomes of the Wisbech Access Study

- 4.4 It has been proposed that the study will be procured in two phases. Phase 1 will investigate options and will be carried out as a webTAG compliant Strategic Outline Business Case, which will conclude with a recommended package of options to be taken forward. Phase 2 would be a webTAG compliant Outline Business Case for the preferred option. The option to be taken forward in phase 2 of the study would be agreed by Cambridgeshire County Council, Fenland District Council and the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough LEP, after the Phase 1 report has concluded.

Timescale

- 4.5 The proposed timescale for this study is as follows:

- Invitation to tender published w/c 22 December 2014
- Return date for bids w/c 12 January 2015
- Appointment of successful bidder end of January 2015
- Strategic Outline Business Case options report May 2015
- Outline Business Case of Preferred options September 2015

Procurement

- 4.6 It is intended to utilise an existing Framework to procure the work - The Crown Commercial Service Traffic Management Technology Framework, Lot 8 Traffic Management Research and Consultancy. The framework will be used to ensure that we can expedite this work and also secure best value for money. It will be important to ensure that this work completes by end of 2015 and identifies an acceptable and deliverable package of transport measures to help secure the provisional £10.5 earmarked for the Wisbech area to 2020.
- 4.7 The following consultants are on the proposed framework:
- AECOM
 - Amey OW
 - Atkins
 - Capita Symonds
 - Hyder Consulting
 - Mott MacDonald
 - Mouchel
 - Ove Arup
 - Parsons Brinckerhoff
 - TRL

NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATION

Board Members are asked to:

- note the work which is being carried out in the Wisbech Area
- provide feedback on the proposed aims, outcomes and timescales for procuring the Wisbech Access Study and endorse the procurement of the study