

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

24 MARCH 2021

A46 NEWARK BYPASS CONSULTATION: NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide Members with an update on the public consultation for A46 for the Newark Northern Bypass which closed on 2 February 2021.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Members will recall from the January meeting that the Newark Northern Bypass remain a strategic priority at national, regional, and local level. This is reflected its inclusion in the National Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS 2); the A46 Corridor Study and Trans Midlands Trade Corridor (TMTC) work by Midlands Connect; and the Council's Core Strategy (2019) and Community Plan (2020).

2.2 The consultation which ran from December 2020-Feb 2021 set out some proposed route options. This consultation was non-statutory and was the first opportunity for the Council, stakeholders, and residents to see any level of detail or likely impacts.

3.0 Update

3.1 A copy of the Council's formal reply to the consultation is appended to this report. The consultation reply was drafted following consultation with a number of partners, residents, local action groups, and Members. Prior to issuing the consultation its content was rehearsed at a cross-party meeting of Members representing wards affected by the proposed route(s).

3.2 Highways England were made aware of the following 3 key matters issues, which also fully align with the strategic key priorities of Midlands Connect, Nottinghamshire County Council, and Lincolnshire County Council:

- The need to ensure that any promoted scheme includes for the grade separation of the Cattle Market roundabout; and
- The need to ensure that any proposed scheme does not prejudice, either during construction or at a later date, the ability to reasonably operate and, in due course, grade separate the existing Newark Flat Rail Crossing; and
- The need to ensure appropriate, robust, and well-communicated traffic management solution(s) during the construction phase(s) of any approved route, including an ability to utilise the Newark Southern link Road (alongside additional funding) as part of such a solution.

3.3 In addition, the Council's consultation reply drew particular attention to the need to: more comprehensively and pro-actively engage with stakeholders and residents; the necessity to be cognisant of plans promoted as part of the Newark Town Investment Plan (including the Newark Gateway redevelopment and Showground activity); and the need to revisit the scheme design and impacts at the Winthorpe end of the route.

3.4 NSDC have requested to be engaged on an ongoing basis, with Highways England and their consultants now agreeing to regular liaison as consultation replies are digested and responded to. Further regular updates will be provided in due course.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 Much of the wider community of Newark was directly consulted on the A46 proposals by post. The Council's Communications Team also shared the programme of social media activity from Highways England. Targeted engagement and explanation took place at a community level, including with residents of Newark, Farndon, Winthorpe, and the Gypsy and Traveller communities at Tolney Lane.

4.2 The A46 is identified as a key piece of infrastructure in the Local Development Framework and in the Community Plan. Preparation of the former (in the form of the Amended Core Strategy) required that all policies were subject to appraisal against the Integrated Impacts Assessment (IIA). The IIA incorporates a Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA). The EqIA is a way of demonstrating the District Council is fulfilling the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 There are no direct digital implications arising from this report.

6.0 Financial Implications FIN20-21/4602

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

7.1 Delivery of the A46 Newark Bypass remains a specific aim within the Community Plan objective of delivering inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Achieving this objective will help reduce congestion on the town's roads and, allied to the delivery of the Southern Link Road and Newark Town Investment Plan, has great potential to support the enhancement of the town centre, while increased road capacity will facilitate new jobs in the District that will contribute to increased opportunities for greater social mobility.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that Members:

- a) Note the contents of the report and formal NSDC Consultation reply; and
- b) Seek ongoing and regular updates as the project progresses.

Reason for Recommendation

To positively influence Highways England's decision-making process and to ensure that the preferred option that is to be taken forward delivers optimal local and strategic benefits.

Background Papers

A46 Newark Bypass Public Consultation, Highways England 2020:

https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/a46-newark-bypass-options/supporting_documents/A46%20Newark%20Bypass%20%20Consultation%20Brochure.pdf

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