



Report to: Cabinet Meeting – 4 October 2022

Portfolio Holders: Councillor David Lloyd – Strategy, Performance & Finance
Councillor Rhona Holloway – Economic Development & Visitors

Director Lead: Matt Lamb – Director, Planning & Growth

Lead Officer: Matthew Norton – Business Manager, Planning Policy & Infrastructure, Ext 5852

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	Newark Southern Link Road
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on the funding and delivery of the Newark Southern Link Road, including updates to the Council’s Capital Program.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) note progress on the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR), including the pending receipt of tender returns from contractors to build the remainder of the SLR; and b) subject to the outcome of the tender returns, to delegate to the Director for Planning and Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Strategy, Performance & Finance and Economic Development & Visitors a request being made to Nottinghamshire County Council to provide an appropriate financial contribution to the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR).
Alternative Options Considered	A range of options, over many years, have previously been explored to deliver the SLR (in full or in part) and its associated growth and congestion-reduction benefits. The funding package now in place represents the most viable option to accelerate delivery of the full SLR and associated growth.
Reason for Recommendations	To deliver the Newark SLR, addressing local congestion and unlocking significant growth in delivering the Middlebeck Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) including associated housing, employment, education, and open space in accordance with the Council’s Amended Core Strategy (2019) and Community Plan (2020-2023).

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Newark Southern Link Road (SLR) has been a long-standing priority for this Council, having been promoted following the Growth Point in 2006 and adoption of the Core Strategy in 2011. Previous updates on the SLR have been provided to the Economic Development and Policy & Finance Committees. For completeness, such updates have detailed the delivery of Phase 1 of the SLR (supported by loan funding from the then Homes & Communities Agency) unlocking up to 649 houses, open spaces, and the new Christchurch primary school.
- 1.2 The remainder of the SLR has been subject to ongoing partnership working between the developers (Urban&Civic), Homes England, National Highways, Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC), D2N2 LEP (£7m grant committed, of which £6m is remaining) and NSDC (£5m grant committed, 2.5m of which is subject to a match contribution from NCC. NCC are yet to commit to any grant contribution) in order to secure a deliverable funding mix (public and private). The importance of the SLR has also been identified by Newark Town Council, Newark Town Board and central government given it formed one of the Newark Towns Deal projects. In October 2021 NSDC, NCC and U&C were successful in securing £20m grant from Round 1 of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF).
- 1.3 LUF funds are now been released to the Council in agreed tranches, in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NSDC and the Department for Transport (DfT). Funding is released to U&C subject to agreed milestones contained within a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). An initial GFA (which allowed for the release of some of the public sector grant for design work) has been superseded by a new and single GFA covering all remaining public sector grant. Payments to U&C are made in arrears (upon the receipt of a valid invoice) and are subject to assurance from the Council's independently appointed Monitoring Surveyor, with oversight from a Monitoring Board (comprising U&C, Homes England, National Highways, Nottinghamshire County Council, D2N2, and NSDC) and sign-off by the Council's s151 Officer.
- 1.4 Work has progressed at pace to ensure the SLR delivery is accelerated. This has included securing amended detailed highway design from the highway authorities (National Highways and Nottinghamshire County Council) and assembling a contractor package to present to market. At the time of writing, the procurement process is 'live' with tender returns expected close to the Cabinet meeting. A verbal update will be provided if received on overall costs and deliverability of the scheme.

A46 Newark Northern Bypass and the SLR

- 1.5 Members will be aware of the welcome announcement in March 2020 that the A46 Newark Northern Bypass scheme was included in the National Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS 2), 2020-2025. Work on the Bypass continues to progress, with the preferred routes having been announced and statutory consultation to follow later this year. Updated work has identified that the approved SLR roundabout, whilst remaining acceptable and capable of implementation, could be enhanced in order to provide an optimum solution to allow it to interface with the emerging A46 Newark Northern Bypass designs. National Highways and U&C have jointly designed a replacement A46

junction design which has this month secured planning permission (Ref. 22/01249/FULM). Subject to this revised roundabout securing technical approval by the 16th January 2023 and NH and U&C agreeing between them (agreed in principle) the appropriate grant NH will provide to cover uplifts in delivery costs, the SLR will be constructed by U&C's contractors with this replacement A46 roundabout design.

- 1.6 Tender returns and securing any final contributions represents what it is hoped will be the final milestone before being able to commence on-site for the delivery of the SLLR in the New Year. The SLR will help to achieve a long-standing strategic priority for the Council, the developer, and our public sector family partners.

2.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, Officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

The report proposes a number of recommendations which have implications for finance, equality and diversity, and legal.

Financial Implications (FIN22-23/5758)

- 2.1 The delivery of the SLR is supported by a raft of public sector grant commitments. This includes £7m from the D2N2 LEP (£6m remaining), £5m from NSDC, and £20m from the Levelling Up Fund. These grant contributions form part of the overall costs of the road with the remainder being covered by the developer, with the support of Homes England loan (as a loan which is re-payable this remains a private sector contribution).
- 2.2 In accordance with previous resolutions of the Council grant funding continues to be released. At the time of writing grant awards of £793,169.57 have been paid covering design and development work for the SLR.
- 2.3 As per paragraph 1.3, LUF funding is now being released to the Council as per the agreement. £7,499,000 has been received to date.

Equality & Diversity

- 2.4 The SLR and the development it unlocks has been subject to an Equalities and Impact Assessments (EIA) and must be designed and delivered in accordance with a raft of technical statutory processes which address such issues.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Newark Town Investment Plan, 2020

National Road Investment Strategy (RIS) 2, 2020

Memorandum of Understanding (Dept. for Transport & NSDC) - Newark Southern Link Road, 2022

Policy & Finance Committee Report, 17 March 2022