

Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 21 July 2026

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director – Planning & Growth

Lead Officer: Matthew Norton, Assistant Director – Planning & Economy

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report / Non-Key Decision
Reason for Report	To enable the Council's budget process to proceed in accordance with agreed assumptions
Report Title	Newark A46 Bypass – Update and Next Steps
Purpose of Report	To update Cabinet on the current position regarding the A46 Newark Bypass, the recent uncertainty affecting delivery, and the proposed next steps for continued lobbying and partnership working to secure delivery of this nationally important infrastructure within the Road Investment Strategy 3 period (2026–2031).
Recommendations	That Cabinet: a) note the current position regarding the A46 Newark Bypass, including the Development Consent Order approval, the scheme's inclusion within Road Investment Strategy 3 (2026–2031) in March 2026, and the recent uncertainty following the cancellation of the Skanska contract and Department for Transport letter of 30 June 2026 reproduced at Appendix A; b) strongly reaffirm the Council's support for the earliest possible delivery of the A46 Newark Bypass as nationally important infrastructure; c) strongly support that the Council should continue to work with partners, coordinated through the East Midlands Combined County Authority, including East Midlands Councils/Transport for the East Midlands, Nottinghamshire County Council, Lincolnshire County Council, local Members of Parliament and regional business partners, to lobby Government for the scheme to be delivered as soon as possible within the RIS3 period; d) delegates authority to the Leader of the Council and Director – Planning and Growth to finalise and submit any letters, consultation responses or joint representations required to support delivery of the scheme in accordance with recommendations b) and c) above; and

	e) notes that officers will continue to keep under review the local implications of any delay, particularly for the Newark Urban Area, the ongoing work for the new Local Plan, and the Council's land and property interests at the Newark Lorry Park.
Alternative Options Considered	The Council could choose to remain silent on recent developments, which would be contrary to our role over many years to lobby, alongside public and private sector partners, to promote and secure at a national level the importance of the A46 Bypass which is nationally, locally and regionally critical in delivering journey-time savings, unlocking growth and productivity, and alleviating congestion.
Reason for Recommendations	To ensure continued efforts to secure this important national infrastructure.

1.0 **Background**

- 1.1 Members will be aware from previous updates that the A46 Newark Bypass has been a long-standing strategic infrastructure priority for Newark and the wider East Midlands. Following many years of coordinated lobbying and evidence-based assessments the scheme has been recognised as nationally important. The scheme was announced as funded by the Chancellor as part of the Government's Plan for Change on 8th July 2025. It secured consent via approval by the Secretary of State for Transport of a Development Consent Order, a long and complex process, on 1 October 2025. In March this year the project was identified by the Government as one of the key projects in the UK's national Road Investment Strategy 3, which identified projects expected to start between 2026-2031.
- 1.2 Recent announcements have created uncertainty. On 29 June 2026, it was reported that National Highways was seeking a new main contractor after the cancellation of Skanska UK's £297m design-and-build contract for the Newark Bypass. The following day, the East Midlands Mayor and Leader of this Council were informed, without consultation, that the scheme was one of two within the region that were proposed to be cancelled in order to contribute towards national defence funding. This news was followed by a letter from the Department for Transport (see **Appendix A**) which makes clear that the department will be consulting on the possible cancellation of the two schemes specifically because it is prioritising those already in construction or due to start construction in the near future. No details on the proposed consultation are provided at the time of print.
- 1.3 Members will be aware of strong and unequivocal statements in the press which make clear the unacceptability the Governments recent announcements from the Mayor of the East Midlands, the Leader of this Council and the Leader of Nottinghamshire Country Council. The Mayor for the East Midlands is already convening partners and MP's across the region to coordinate on making the case to government for ensuring that the A46 remains a national priority to deliver as soon as possible with the RIS3 period.

2.0 **Proposal / Options Considered**

- 2.1 Given the importance of this scheme nationally, regionally and locally it is recommended that this Council continues to play its part in presenting robust evidence as to why the A46 Bypass remains critically important. The Leader of the Council has already written to the relevant Minister to express disappointment at recent announcements, as detailed at **Appendix B**. It is recommended that the Council continues to work with its partners and industry, via the lead coordination of the East Midlands Mayor, to present its case to Government.
- 2.5 Officers will also continue to assess the local implications of delay and will bring forward further reports where decisions are required in relation to the Council's own land and property, notably Newark lorry park. Decisions on the A46 Bypass will also likely affect the emerging new Local Plan.

3.0 **Implications**

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

Implications Considered			
Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	Yes	Equality & Diversity	Yes
Human Resources	NA	Human Rights	Yes
Legal	Yes	Data Protection	NA
Digital & Cyber Security	NA	Safeguarding	NA
Sustainability	Yes	Crime & Disorder	NA
LGR	Yes	Tenant Consultation	NA

Financial Implications (FIN26-27/8286)

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The recommendations do not commit the Council to capital or revenue expenditure. However, delay or cancellation of the A46 Newark Bypass could have indirect financial and economic implications for development viability, investment confidence, the Newark Gateway, the Council's lorry park and related land interests. Any proposal requiring Council expenditure or a financial contribution would be the subject of a separate report and financial appraisal.

Legal and Human Rights (Legal Implications - LEG2627/6951)

- 3.2 The A46 Newark Bypass is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project promoted by National Highways and controlled by Government through the Department for Transport. The Development Consent Order has been granted. The recommendations in this report relate to lobbying, partnership working and representations, rather than the

Council exercising statutory decision-making powers. Legal advice should be sought on any future formal consultation response, land agreement, funding commitment or property matter arising from the scheme.

Human rights considerations, including property rights, have been considered through the DCO process and will need to remain under review in any Council land or property decisions.

Equality and Diversity

- 3.3 There are no direct equality implications arising from the recommendations. Continued engagement should recognise that congestion, unreliable journeys and disruption can affect residents, workers, visitors and businesses differently. Any future scheme-specific Council decision or consultation response should continue to consider equalities impacts where relevant.

Sustainability

- 3.4 The DCO process considered the environmental impacts and mitigation associated with the highway scheme. The Council's lobbying position should continue to recognise both the economic and transport benefits of improved journey time reliability and the need for environmental mitigation, biodiversity and sustainable travel improvements where these form part of the consented scheme. Prolonged delay may also prolong existing congestion and associated local impacts.

LGR

- 3.5 There are no direct Local Government Reorganisation implications arising from the recommendations. However, strategic infrastructure delivery, growth planning, transport connectivity and regional economic development are likely to remain important considerations for any future local government structures. Maintaining records of the Council's position and partnership activity will assist continuity.

Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Human Resources, Safeguarding, Crime and Disorder and Tenant Consultation

- 3.6 No direct implications have been identified for these areas from the recommendations in this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None