



CABINET – 17 SEPTEMBER 2021

INTERIM COALVILLE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet of the outcome of the engagement on the draft interim Coalville Transport Strategy (ICTS) and to seek approval to adopt the ICTS.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that:
 - (a) The responses to the engagement on the draft Interim Coalville Transport Strategy (ICTS), as set out in paragraphs 57 to 60 and summarised in Appendix A to the report, be noted;
 - (b) The ICTS, attached as Appendix B to the report, be approved.

Reason for Recommendations

3. Significant traffic congestion in Coalville has affected the lives of its residents, the efficiency of its businesses and its ability to grow. Having a transport strategy for Coalville remains vital to addressing the town's existing traffic problems, supporting its continued growth and achieving wider objectives, including in respect of the environment.
4. The ICTS will ensure that the County Council, as the local Highway Authority (LHA), is using the most up-to-date evidence and information when seeking developer contributions, providing highways advice to North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) and supporting the District Council with any highway related planning appeals.
5. The ICTS will help to provide a transparent framework for determining decisions on transport priorities, ensuring co-ordination of investment and support NWLDC's Local Plan. Any delay in adopting the ICTS could potentially impact on securing developer contributions towards highway infrastructure in NWLDC to support the local growth agenda.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

6. Subject to approval, the ICTS will be published on the County Council's website.
7. It is currently anticipated that a further report concerning the A511 Growth Corridor scheme, which forms a key part of the ICTS, will be considered by the Cabinet later in 2021.
8. The development of the final CTS is expected to be completed in 2023/24.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

9. In March 2011 the County Council approved the third Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP3). This contains six strategic transport goals. Goal 1 is to have a transport system that supports a prosperous economy and provides successfully for population growth. The LTP3 sets out the County Council's approach to achieving this, namely, to improve the management of the road network and continuing to address congestion issues.
10. The Enabling Growth Action Plan, approved by the Cabinet in March 2015, identifies the A511 Coalville Growth Corridor as a priority for the County Council. In September 2015 the Cabinet considered a report on the review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Investment Proposals and agreed areas for investment, including £2 million to enable the modelling and advanced design of highways infrastructure schemes, including in and around Coalville. In November 2015 the Cabinet prioritised development of a package of infrastructure to deliver growth in Coalville concentrating on the A511 and Bardon Link Road.
11. In November 2018 the Cabinet approved the Strategic Growth Plan (SGP), which provides an agreed local framework for considering the longer-term needs of the area. Coalville was identified as an 'Area of Managed Growth in Local Plans', recognised as being under intense pressure for development and having made substantial provision within, and on the edges of, the existing town. Much of this has still to be built and is dependent upon new local infrastructure.
12. In March 2019, the Cabinet approved the development of a package of measures along the A511/A50 corridor ('A511 Growth Corridor') and agreed that this should be the Council's priority for bidding for Major Road Network (MRN) funding in the period 2020 to 2025. In November 2019, the Cabinet approved the commitment of further resources and actions to take forward delivery of the A511 Growth Corridor scheme.
13. In June 2020 the Cabinet considered the outcome of study work and the implications that this had for taking forward the ongoing development and delivery of the CTS and for NWLDC's 'Coalville Contribution Strategy'. It resolved, inter-alia, that the County Council works with NWLDC to produce a formal Coalville Transport Strategy document.
14. In November 2020, the Leicester, and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities (LLSTP) document was approved by the Cabinet. It supports the proposals set out in the SGP, identifies delivery of the A511 MRN Growth Corridor scheme as a key priority for supporting growth in North West Leicestershire.

15. In March 2021 the Cabinet considered a report on the A511 Growth Corridor proposals, including the Bardon Link Road in Coalville.
16. In June 2021, the Cabinet considered a report on the National Bus Strategy ('Bus Back Better') and national guidance on developing Bus Service Improvement Plans, whilst in July 2021 the Cabinet approved the Cycling and Walking Strategy. Work to develop passenger transport and walking and cycling in the Coalville area, which are key elements of the ICTS, will be developed in line with these strategies.

Resource Implications

17. Since its inception, it has been expected that the Coalville Transport Strategy would be delivered through a mixture of public and private (developer) funding.
18. A bid has been made to the Department for Transport (DfT) for Major Road Network (MRN) funding for the A511 Growth Corridor scheme, which is a major component of the ICTS. The bid is on the basis of a total estimated scheme cost of £49m, of which £42m is expected to be met from MRN funding and the remaining £7m represents the local contribution requirement, e.g. found from developer contributions. However, the scheme estimate is currently under review; factors such as significant construction materials' cost inflation mean that the estimated cost is likely to increase. The MRN scheme will be subject to a further report to the Cabinet later this year.
19. The ICTS sets out how the County Council will develop plans for complementary (to the MRN scheme) highway, passenger transport, and active travel schemes to develop the full CTS, and how A511 MRN Growth Corridor will be funded and delivered while this work is ongoing.
20. The complementary highway schemes include the A511/Smisby Road roundabout, A511/Nottingham Road roundabout, A511/A42 Junction 13, Copt Oak Crossroads and A511/M1 Junction 22 and these have been provisionally costed at a total of between £25m to £30m; work will continue to refine the proposals. Officers are currently liaising with NWLDC with regard to work that it is doing to develop cycling and walking proposals; proposals for passenger transport enhancements will be linked with work on the development of a Bus Service Improvement Plan for Leicestershire (under the National Bus Strategy).
21. NWLDC has no plans to refresh its 2013 "Section 106 (S106) policy for the delivery of infrastructure in Coalville" (the Policy). As reported to the Cabinet last June, this is due to the impact of Covid-19 on the development market going forward. As Planning Authority NWLDC considered it unwise to be suggesting any increases in the current circumstances.
22. In respect of S106 contributions, it is still anticipated that a potential of £20m will ultimately be secured based on 'current' developments. How much of this might be required to support delivery of the MRN scheme and how much might be available to support delivery of complementary schemes will be subject to the outcomes of the cost estimate review referred to above.

23. The ICTS will be delivered incrementally, as opposed to all at once. Going forward the County Council will continue to pursue Government funding opportunities where affordable (as has already been the case with Growth Deal monies and National Productivity Investment Fund monies previously secured to deliver improvements along the A511 Growth Corridor, and with the current MRN bid); will seek developers to deliver improvements; and seek to secure other developer contributions that are beyond the scope of the Policy based on the ICTS and Local Plan policies. Having the ICTS in place will strengthen the Authority's position in securing S106 contributions.
24. With regard to the Local Plan, NWLDC has recently commenced work to develop a new Plan. *Should* the new Plan allocate further housing growth to Coalville, this would provide new opportunities to secure S106 contributions, increasing the potential total beyond the anticipated £20m based on 'current' developments.
25. The levels of funding secured (from Government or developers) will continue to be monitored and kept under review so that a clear understanding of any funding shortfall for delivery of the overall ICTS is maintained. Likewise, officers will continue to work closely with NWLDC to understand the viability of development sites going forward post pandemic. Such variables will inform future reviews of the level of contributions to be sought under the Policy.
26. The costs of developing the ICTS (including the engagement exercise) have been funded from within Environment and Transport budgets.
27. The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

This report has been circulated to members representing the electoral divisions that are affected by the proposals

Mr. J. G. Coxon CC, Mr. T. Gillard CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Mr. T. Pendleton CC, Mr. N. J. Rushton CC, Mr. R. Ashman CC, Mr. C. A. Smith CC, Mr. K. Merrie CC

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PART B

Background

28. Congestion on the A511 has been a longstanding issue recognised by both NWLDC and the County Council. In 2008 studies were commissioned jointly between the County Council and NWLDC to aid understanding of the causes of the traffic problems in and around Coalville and Ashby and identify measures required to enable the area's continued strategic growth. This work is what was originally referred to as the 'Coalville Transport Strategy (CTS)', albeit no actual strategy document was ever produced at that time.
29. Since work on the original CTS was undertaken, circumstances have evolved; improvements have been delivered in the A511 corridor, including at M1 J22 and A42 J13; proposals for growth in North West Leicestershire have continued to develop, including additional (in comparison to 2008) housing growth in and around Coalville and Ashby; and the development of the A511 Growth Corridor MRN project.
30. In the light of evolving circumstances, a report was considered by the Cabinet in June 2020 which set out the results of work to refresh the evidence base for the CTS and to revisit its content. The ICTS document that has been developed reflects the outcomes of the evidence base refresh.

The ICTS document

31. The final CTS will ultimately consist of a suite of four complementary documents, rather than one stand-alone document. Each document will focus on a specific aspect of Coalville's transport network:
 - a) The A511 (MRN) Growth Corridor
 - b) Complementary highway schemes, such as junction improvements
 - c) Passenger transport, including buses and trains
 - d) Active travel, including walking and cycling
32. Until the whole suite of documents is developed (expected in 2023/24), the individual components will be referred to as the '*Interim Coalville Transport Strategy*' (ICTS).
33. The ICTS document, appended as Appendix B, focuses primarily on the MRN project and the importance of its delivery to the enabling of growth in the A511 corridor. In respect of the other components, the document sets out the following:

ICTS – Complementary Highway Schemes

34. The complementary highway schemes will be developed for more detailed assessment, so that preferred options can be identified for each location. Where appropriate, the preferred options will then be taken through a design and business case process to identify their overall priority within Leicestershire, identify funding sources (e.g. external funding pots, developer contributions), and secure funding

and a place in the construction programme. Consultation exercises will be undertaken as part of any scheme development.

35. The ICTS also sets out how the council will continue to refine proposals for a number of complementary schemes including:
- A511/A42 Junction 13
 - A511/M1 Junction 22
 - A511/Smisby Road roundabout
 - A511/Nottingham Road roundabout
 - Copt Oak Crossroads
36. Initial focus will primarily be on developing the options for the M1 Junction 13 and M1 Junction 22. Work to develop the remaining junctions will continue.

ICTS – Passenger Transport

37. The existing policy document for delivering passenger transport services in Leicestershire is the Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy (PTPS). In March 2021, the Government published ‘Bus Back Better’, a strategy aimed at revolutionising road passenger transport provision in England. As part of this strategy, all local authorities will be required to review their passenger transport services and publish a Bus Improvement Plan.
38. Work to develop passenger transport proposals to support growth in and around the Coalville urban area will be carried out in line with the Council’s existing PTPS and the emerging Bus Improvement Plan, which is currently being consulted on.
39. At present the ICTS makes only a limited reference to the reopening of the Leicester to Burton Line to passenger traffic, noting that the County Council will continue to work with and support the Campaign for the Reopening of the Ivanhoe Line (CRIL) as it continues to develop the case for the Line’s reopening. The ICTS will be reviewed as appropriate so as to align with how the proposals for reopening the Line might move forward. Additionally, short to medium term investment in highway infrastructure that removes potential barriers to housing growth in Coalville and Ashby may help to bolster the case to reopen the Line - more houses equates to great levels of population, thereby increasing potential levels of demand for a rail service between Leicester and Burton.

ICTS – Active Travel

40. The Cabinet approved the Council’s Cycling and Walking Strategy (CaWS) in July 2021. The Council will continue to work with district councils to develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for each district over the next five years. The ICTS reflects the work being undertaken with district partners to develop cycling and walking proposals.
41. Separately, NWLDC is developing its own LCWIP, which will include proposals for Coalville. The County Council will engage with NWLDC through this process to offer appropriate support and advice.

42. The NWLDC LCWIP is due to be published by the end of 2021. The County Council will work closely with NWLDC when developing its own NWL / Coalville Urban Area LCWIP, with a view to building on, and/or incorporating, the District Council's adopted LCWIP in the full CTS.
43. Further work is required to develop proposals for complementary highway schemes, passenger transport and active travel, before these can be formalised as part of the CTS suite of documents. This work will be reliant on further partnership working and the County Council will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders as each of these documents is developed.
44. The work to date will inform the development of the full Coalville Transport Strategy, which is expected to be published, following approval of the Cabinet, in 2023/24. However, the timing and order of this work will depend upon the outcome of the DfT MRN Growth Funding bid and NWLDC planning application decisions.

Other Rail Considerations

45. Final details on the development of HS2 in Leicestershire are yet to be announced by Government. Should approval be given for the proposed route, HS2 will impact on the A511 corridor. Initially, these will be transient impacts associated with a temporary compound and railhead, both to be accessed from the A511, during construction of the Phase 2 route. This will lead to a significant increase in HGV traffic on the A511 during the construction period.
46. Once the line opens, the A511 will form part of the route for traffic travelling from Coalville to access the East Midlands HS2 station. This is likely to have particular impacts on peak hour congestion as a result of people travelling to work at the new station and associated developments, as well as people travelling to the station to catch a train to Leeds or London.

Engagement

47. Engagement with stakeholders is an important part of the process for developing new strategies. It helps to ensure that the Authority takes account of customer expectations and delivers the most appropriate service levels, consistent with the budget available.
48. The draft ICTS utilises evidence and views gathered during the development of various strategies and plans, including the Strategic Growth Plan, North West Leicestershire District Council's Local Plan, the County Council's Strategic Plan and Local Transport Plan and the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities (LLSTP) document. Comprehensive consultation took place in 2020 during the development of the LLSTP. Where appropriate, the feedback from consultations on these documents helped steer development of the ICTS. Legislation, guidance, best practice, evidence, and data etc have also been considered when developing the draft ICTS.
49. In addition, the A511 Growth Corridor (which as previously explained is a key component of the ICTS but is being taken forward separately) was subject to separate consultation in 2019.

Overview of the exercise

50. The 'light touch' engagement on the draft ICTS was held from 5 July to 2 August 2021. There was targeted engagement with the public, County Council members, parish councils and communities. The district council also shared details of the engagement and the Coalville Times was advised of the engagement.
51. The "have your say" section of Leicestershire County Council's website provided an opportunity for people to provide their views on the transport plan for the town and surrounding area.
52. The engagement materials consisted of the draft ICTS document and people were asked to send their views via email or post. Hard copies of documents were available on request.
53. The engagement exercise asked for people's views on the interim Strategy, including:
 - its scope
 - the challenges it presented
 - the prioritisation of highways and transport projects
 - the strategy for complementary highways' schemes, passenger transport and active travel
54. The webpage also explained that once the engagement exercise had closed, views would be analysed and proposals reviewed.
55. The specific aims of the engagement were to:
 - establish the level of public support for the Strategy
 - inform the overall approach to addressing traffic and transport issues
 - inform the further development of proposals for complementary highway schemes, passenger transport and active travel.
56. As specific schemes/initiatives identified within the ICTS are developed, further engagement will be undertaken. The Authority will continue to take an evidence-based approach to maximise benefits for the people of Coalville and the surrounding area.

Engagement Responses - Overview

57. A total of four responses were received from members of the public. A summary of the responses can be found at Appendix A accompanied by detailed officer responses.
58. Three of the four comments received stated that the ICTS did not address cycling, walking and passenger transport infrastructure requirements. The officer response confirmed that the ICTS does address the issue of active travel infrastructure, but as an interim document its focus is on the A511 MRN Growth Corridor. Such requirements will be identified as part of the NWLDC's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which will set out plans to make cycling and walking more

attractive and increase travel by these modes. Once the LCWIP has been developed this will be incorporated in an updated version of the CTS.

59. The other comment received queried the scale of the issues identified in the ICTS and the need to make considerably more changes to road infrastructure or reduce the levels of growth. The officer response confirmed that the need for and benefits of the schemes proposed in the ICTS have been thoroughly tested and evidenced as part of the proposal development. It is considered that the scale of infrastructure requirements are in line with the growth proposals for the area.
60. Given the high-level nature of the comments received and that no fundamental objections to the Strategy were received, no changes have been made to the ICTS.

Conclusion

61. The ICTS is a high-level strategic document that sets out transport aspirations to meet the challenge of economic and housing growth in Coalville and its surrounding area. More detail about specific schemes, initiatives, and development etc sits or will sit beneath the Strategy. Whilst work on COVID-19 transport recovery continues, it is not possible to predict its longer-term impact on transport use and on wider societal behaviours. As knowledge and understanding progress, the ICTS and final CTS will be reviewed and, where appropriate revised, to reflect this evidence.
62. There are no fundamental reasons to abandon and/or pause the development of the ICTS because of the responses received from the engagement.
63. The publication of the ICTS is a starting point. The county council will continue to work with stakeholders and partners to develop and deliver the highways and transportation and other infrastructure measures required to enable Coalville's long-term growth within the wider financial constraints of the Authority.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

64. The Equality Act 2010 requires the Authority to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity between different protected groups.
65. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) screening has been completed. This identified an overall neutral/positive impact from the ICTS. A full EHRIA was not therefore required. A separate EHRIA is being undertaken for the A511 Growth Corridor scheme.
66. The Strategy and schemes will continue to be developed, focussing on providing the greatest benefit. The Council will seek to ensure that specific infrastructure and services are planned effectively, including possible alternative methods of transport and/or priority for specific groups, to make certain that any negative impacts are considered, and infrastructure and services are planned effectively.
67. Where appropriate, separate Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments will be completed as specific schemes are developed. The Council will continue to communicate, engage and/or consult on schemes, where appropriate, so that the

needs of communities can be considered during the schemes development and any negative impacts can be mitigated.

Environmental Impact

68. NWLDC have identified four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) in NWL, with one on Stephenson Way/Broomleys Road, Coalville up to its junction with the A511.
69. The ICTS and subsequent schemes will be informed by the Council's Environment Strategy, Carbon Reduction Road Map, Strategic Plan, and national policies, ensuring that environmental and climate change commitments are an integral part of proposals.
70. There are currently no environmental implications arising from this report. Environmental Impact Assessments will be completed as specific schemes are developed, where appropriate.

Background Papers

Local Transport Plan (2011 - 2026)

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-maintenance/local-transport-plan>

Report to the Cabinet on 29 March 2019: Environment and Transport 2019/20 Highways Capital Programme and Highways Transportation Work Programme

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5601>

Submission of an outline business case to Government for funding for the A511 MRN Growth Corridor improvements in January 2020

[*A511 MRN Growth Corridor Outline Business Case*](#)

Report to the Cabinet on 23 June 2020: Coalville Transport Strategy

<http://cexmodgov1.ad.leics.gov.uk:9075/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5996&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 20 November 2020: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities 2020 to 2050

<http://cexmodgov1.ad.leics.gov.uk:9075/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5999&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 23 March 2021: A511 Growth Corridor Proposals – Bardon Link Road

<http://cexmodgov1.ad.leics.gov.uk:9075/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=6441&Ver=4>

Appendices

Appendix A - Engagement comments and responses

Appendix B - Final Interim Coalville Transport Strategy