

**CABINET – 12 SEPTEMBER 2025****A511 GROWTH CORRIDOR – TO COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION OF
A SMALL SECTION OF WORKS ON THE BARDON LINK ROAD,
COALVILLE****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT****PART A****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet's approval to commence construction of a small section of works on the Bardon Link Road, as illustrated on the appended drawing. The delivery of these works is required to implement the planning consent associated with the Bardon Link Road, which will expire on 16 January 2026 if works do not commence before this date.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
 - a) Approves the delivery of the works on the Bardon Link Road, which comprise setting out of the drainage pond and the construction of a short section of haul road, as illustrated on the appended drawing, ahead of the scheme securing Full Business Case approval from the Department for Transport (DfT);
 - b) Notes the latest position with regards to costs and timescales for the scheme.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendation

3. The planning permission for the Bardon Link Road will lapse on 16 January 2026, unless construction works commence on site before this date. It was originally anticipated that the construction would commence in spring 2025 but the Early Contractor Involvement process, whilst providing significant benefits for the smooth delivery of the scheme, has delayed the start.
4. It would be necessary to submit a new, full planning application for the Bardon Link Road if the deadline to commence works was not met. This would incur

significant additional cost and it would delay the overall programme by approximately one year while the new consent was sought, putting DfT funding at risk of being withdrawn.

5. The Cabinet's approval is sought as these initial works would be delivered ahead of the Government formally confirming its commitment to fund the A511 Major Road Network (MRN) improvements (which is subject to the approval of a Full Business Case due to be submitted in February 2026). In a letter issued to Leaders of Local Authorities dated 8 July 2025, the Government reconfirmed its 'in principle' support of the project.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

6. Work is ongoing to discharge the pre-commencement planning conditions to allow the initial construction of the Bardon Link Road to commence in December 2025, before the planning permission lapses on 16 January 2026. This is in advance of formal confirmation of DfT funding for the scheme achieved via approval of the Full Business Case.
7. A further report will be submitted to the Cabinet in February 2026 to coincide with the submission of the Full Business Case to the DfT. This report will provide an update on the Contractor's Target Price and seek authorisation to move into the construction phase, subject to approval from the DfT.
8. Mobilisation on site for the main works is expected to take place in June 2026.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

9. In March 2011, the County Council approved the third Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP3). This contained six strategic transport goals, of which one was to have a transport system that supports a prosperous economy and provides successfully for population growth. The LTP3 set out the Council's approach to achieving this, namely, to improve the management of the road network and continuing to address congestion issues.
10. In March 2014, the Cabinet approved the principles set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, which prioritises support for the economy of market towns and rural Leicestershire. The County Council's Enabling Growth Action Plan (approved in March 2015) supports the development of market towns for employment land as a priority and includes a specific action to work with the North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) to plan for the future growth in the area, particularly Coalville.
11. In November 2015, the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee was advised that, given the significant opposition to making any changes to Hugglescote Crossroads, future highways improvement work in the area would be focused on the A511.

12. In March 2019, the Cabinet agreed to the development of the Strategic Outline Business Case (OBC) and the OBC for the A511 MRN Growth Corridor Scheme. It authorised the Director for Environment and Transport to prepare and submit bids, as appropriate, to secure external funding for delivery of schemes identified in the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme.
13. In November 2019, following public consultation, the Cabinet agreed to support the proposals comprising improvements to eight junctions along the A511, including a Bardon Link Road extension to south-east Coalville, and dual carriageway between Thornborough Road and Whitwick Road. It authorised the Director for Environment and Transport to use the existing funding allocation of £4m capital funding to develop and submit a planning application for the Bardon Link Road and undertake all necessary preparations to progress the scheme to Full Business Case and, subject to the DfT's approval, deliver the scheme.
14. In March 2021, the Cabinet agreed to continue to progress the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme, including submission of the Full Business Case to the DfT, and authorised the Director of Environment and Transport (following consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources and the Cabinet Lead Member) to undertake a pre-submission consultation exercise to support the submission of a planning application for the Bardon Link Road aligned to the programme for scheme delivery as required by the DfT. The Cabinet also agreed that all necessary work continued to progress the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme, including submission of the Full Business Case to the DfT, and authorised the Director for Environment and Transport to make minor changes to the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme as it was developed.
15. In March 2022, the Cabinet noted the projected cost increases for the A511 MRN project following the recent independent audit of the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and noted the plans in place to secure the additional funding required. The Cabinet also noted the outcome of the pre-planning informal consultation that took place between 27 September 2021 and 31 October 2021 to support the development of a planning application and to enable the planning application with regard to the route of the Bardon Link Road to be submitted to the Council's Development Control and Regulatory Board. In order to complete the application process for the DfT MRN funding, it was necessary for the Council to prepare and submit a Full Business Case before DfT funding was awarded. The circumstances in which the previous Cabinet approval was given in March 2021 to progress the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme to the Full Business Case, had significantly changed, including market conditions, risks, and the potential need to increase forward funding.
16. Following the Cabinet's authorisation granted in September 2023, on 16 November 2023, Leicestershire County Council made "The Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023" (CPO) under Sections 239, 240, 246, 250 and 260 of the Highways Act 1980 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 to secure the compulsory acquisition of the land required to deliver the scheme. The County Council also made "The

Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) (Side Roads) Order 2023" (SRO), under Sections 14 and 125 of the Highways Act 1980 to construct new highways and public rights of ways, stop up, divert, improve or otherwise deal with a highway including public rights of ways and the closure and creation of private means of access to support the delivery of the scheme.

17. The CPO and SRO were confirmed by the Secretary of State on 25 November 2024 following a public inquiry thus enabling the County Council to acquire all land required to deliver the scheme through implementation of the Orders.

Resource Implications

18. There are no additional resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report; the proposed works will be carried out within the planned budget for the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme.
19. The outturn costs for the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme have been the subject of previous Cabinet reports and are currently estimated to be £65.9m inclusive of contingency.
20. A total of £41.7m will come from the DfT MRN Fund, subject to approval of the Full Business Case, with the remaining £24.2m coming from Section 106 contributions secured through the Coalville Contribution Strategy. To date, the Council has received £15.9m of the Section 106 contributions and therefore, until further developer income is received, it would require to forward fund £8.3m. The programme would first look to use any external funding prior to using Council resources and it is assumed that further contributions will have been received at this time reducing the burden of forward funding.
21. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

22. This report will be circulated to Mr. D. Harrison CC, Mr. P. Harrison CC, Mr. J. Boam CC, Mr. O. O'Shea CC, Mr. V. Richichi CC, Mr. C. Smith CC and Mr. C. Whitford CC.

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PART B

Background

23. Congestion on the A511 Growth Corridor has been a long-standing issue recognised by both the NWLDC and the County Council. In 2008, when the Coalville Transport Strategy (CTS) was developed, the Council investigated junctions on the corridor requiring improvement to facilitate housing growth in Coalville and Ashby.
24. An outcome of the CTS was the implementation of the Coalville Contribution Strategy to help facilitate the delivery of improvements along the A511 Growth Corridor. Developer contributions have been collected through Section 106 agreements in accordance with the NWLDC Local Plan which requires that where "new development has a demonstrable impact upon the highway network, contributions towards improvements will be sought commensurate with the impact. The following specific highway improvements are identified as priorities..... the A511 corridor between J22 of the M1 and J13 of the A42". NWLDC policy "Priorities for Developer Financial Contributions for infrastructure provision relating to Major Residential Development Proposals in and around Coalville", adopted in 2013, gives highway infrastructure investment the highest priority for funding. However, insufficient funding has currently been received from the Contribution Strategy to deliver the range of improvements required and issues (such as congestion and pollution) have become increasingly pronounced. This is likely to be exacerbated further by increases in background traffic and the significant levels of growth planned for Coalville as part of the District Council's Local Plan.
25. The A511 Growth Corridor was recognised by the former Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership in its Strategic Economic Plan as one of five Growth Areas. The Strategic Economic Plan states that through appropriate investment and improvements along the corridor, there is the potential to deliver at least 5,275 houses and 25 hectares of employment land. Importantly, a significant number of the committed dwellings (3,500) are on sites which are collectively referred to as south-east Coalville.
26. Taking into account the aims of the MRN funding opportunity and the evidence of priorities needed to support growth, a package was developed for submission to the DfT to seek MRN funding. The A511 Growth Corridor proposals consist of a range of measures, including improvements to eight junctions, a dual carriageway between Thornborough Road and Whitwick Road in Coalville and the Bardon Link Road. This main part of the Link Road is being provided as part of the south-east Coalville development. It is the extension of this link which required planning permission, approved in January 2023.
27. Implementation of the A511 MRN Growth Corridor Scheme will provide the breathing space to enable a wider transport strategy for Coalville and the surrounding area to address localised traffic issues, public transport improvements and walking and cycling connectivity; building on the work done

as part of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund in 2012 and 2013.

DfT Major Road Network Bid

28. The Council submitted the MRN bid to the DfT in July 2019, requesting funding to prepare an OBC by December 2019 with a potential scheme construction start date of 2022.
29. In October 2019, the DfT announced that the bid was successful, with £1.5m funding awarded to commence work on the OBC from July 2019. The OBC was submitted in January 2020, with a potential construction start date of spring 2022.
30. As a result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the DfT requested a revised OBC to understand the impact of the pandemic on all projects that were to be supported by MRN funding. The revised OBC was submitted in July 2020 and subsequently approved by the DfT in summer 2021.

Funding

31. The estimated cost of the A511 Growth Corridor Scheme, as submitted in the OBC, was £47.5m of which £40.4m is expected to be met from DfT funding. As reported to the Cabinet in March 2022, the Council completed an extensive independent audit to review how it develops and delivers the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme. This was driven by unstable market conditions, increasing scheme costs, the financial position of the Council and the acknowledgement that the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme is the largest the Council has ever had.
32. As the A511 MRN project progressed through this new process, the project cost was re-examined to account for new risks (particularly inflation), but also to consider wider lessons learnt from other recently completed projects. In summary, this resulted in the overall scheme cost increasing beyond that set out in the OBC.
33. The revised budget range showed the total outturn costs could vary between circa £50m and £70m (currently estimated to be £65.9m including contingency), and the key changes included inflation, construction costs, professional fees and risk. The funding gap between the revised scheme costs and DfT grant will be predominantly met from developer contributions identified to support the CTS. A small contribution is being met from Council budgets (£0.1m).
34. It is likely there will be a requirement for the Council to forward fund a proportion of the developer contributions needed to meet the full scheme costs. This involves a risk to the Council if the developer funding to be used to recoup the forward funding does not fully materialise via developer contributions – noting that decisions on developer contributions will be made by the District Council as the Local Planning Authority.

35. However, contributions of approximately £15.9m for physical infrastructure works have been received to date through the Contribution Strategy. Beyond this, growth allocated through the NWLDC's Local Plan, or other schemes for which planning permission have been granted, is expected to secure agreement on further Section 106 (developer) funds in excess of the £8.3m identified in the Contribution Strategy.

Consultation

36. Following the Cabinet's approval in March 2021, an informal public consultation exercise was undertaken to ascertain the level of support for the proposed link road. The informal consultation commenced on 27 September 2021 and ran until 31 October 2021. The consultation exercise included a variety of communication methods, such as letters, social media platforms and posters.
37. All consultation responses were considered in a consultation analysis, including feedback form responses, emails and phone calls and comments made on the online consultation platform. In summary, the majority of feedback was focussed on the entire A511 Growth Corridor rather than just the Bardon Link Road proposals. This has been reviewed in detail, and responses provided against each theme (such as speed limits, congestion, pollution, environmental impact, public transport, and construction phase disturbance).
38. The Bardon Link Road proposals have received mixed views from those that chose to comment with an almost even split of for and against the proposals.
39. In June 2023, the Council commenced communication with the relevant parties in relation to land acquisition. This included issuing Requests for Information to affected parties to raise awareness of the Council's need to acquire land via a CPO. The CPO and SRO were made on 16 November 2023 and confirmed by the Secretary of State on 25 November 2024, following a Public Inquiry which took place in June 2024.
40. As the scheme progresses towards construction in early 2026, the Council will continue to liaise with key partners and stakeholders to make them aware of the construction programme and any key requirements for temporary traffic management.

Next Steps and Conclusion

41. The planning permission for the Bardon Link Road was approved on 17 January 2023 and it will subsequently lapse on 16 January 2026, unless the construction works commence on site before this date.
42. It has been confirmed with the Council's planning officers that the construction of the works comprising setting out of the drainage pond and the construction of a short section of haul road as per the appended drawing, will effectively commence the development, meeting the deadline for commencement in accordance with that condition of the planning permission, and ensuring that the project may be completed in line with the further conditions of the

permission.

43. While there is a risk as to Government funding not being available, the DfT has advised the County Council of its 'in principle' support for the project and the allocated MRN funding. These works would be delivered ahead of the Government formally confirming its commitment to fund the A511 MRN improvements, which is subject to the approval of a Full Business Case that is due to be submitted to the Government in February 2026.
44. Although Government funding for these initial works has not been secured yet, these works will be funded by Section 106 contributions previously secured through the Coalville Contribution Strategy.
45. If approved, works implementing the planning permission for the Bardon Link Road will commence in December 2025. Alongside this, the Council will be seeking the DfT's approval of the Full Business Case in early 2026 to secure the MRN funding. The land acquisition would follow shortly after with construction commencing in spring/summer 2026.

Equality Implications

46. The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to consider the need to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity between different protected groups.
47. The Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) screening and full report were re-examined in November 2022 after submission of the planning application in May 2022.
48. In 2024, a further review of the EHRIA was carried out to ensure continued compliance with equality legislation and to address any emerging issues associated with the use of compulsory purchase powers.
49. The EHRIA highlighted a range of potential impacts, both positive and negative, associated with the proposed works. These include construction related effects such as dust and noise, as well as potential changes to road safety. The assessment also sets out a series of mitigation measures designed to minimise any adverse consequences and ensure that the risks were appropriately managed.
50. By delivering the embedded mitigation and recommendations outlined, the proposed scheme would meet its responsibility in relation to equality, diversity, and community cohesion.

Human Rights Implications

51. By delivering embedded mitigation and recommendations outlined in the EHRIA, the proposed scheme would meet its responsibility in relation to human rights.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet, 15 September 2023. (Item 270) 'A511 Growth Corridor - Making of the Compulsory Purchase Order And Side Roads Order for Land Required'

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7078&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet, 29 March 2022. (Item109) 'A511 Growth Corridor Proposals – Bardon Link Road'

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=6774#AI71043>

Report to the Cabinet, 23 March 2021. (Item 499) 'A511 Growth Corridor Proposals – Bardon Link Road'

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=6441#AI67306>

Report to the Cabinet, 29 March 2019. (Item 261) 'Environment and Transport 2019/20 Highways Capital Programme and Highways Transportation Work Programme'

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5601&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet, 16 March 2015. (Item 273) 'Enabling Growth Plan'

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4360&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet, 5 March 2014. (Item 112) 'Strategic Economic Plan and City Deal'

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=3988&Ver=4>

Report to the County Council, 23 March 2011. (Item 97a) 'Final Draft Local Transport Plan (LTP3) Proposals':

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=3057&Ver=4>

Planning Consultation Report:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/Appendix-D-Statement-of-Community-Engagement.pdf>

Appendix

Proposed Works at Bardon Link Road

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