

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Prosperity & Economic Regeneration

Date of Meeting: 15 April 2013
Report of: Head of Highways and Transport
Subject/Title: Revised Congleton transport Infrastructure objectives and strategic option assessment
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jamie Macrae

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks formal approval to revise the objectives of the Congleton transport infrastructure study.
- 1.2 The report also seeks approval of the initial sifting exercise of possible solutions against the objectives of the study. The remaining solutions will go forward for further assessment.
- 1.3 The report outlines the next steps and approval stages to confirm a preferred solution that best addresses the study objectives.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the council approves the following revised scheme objectives for the Congleton transport infrastructure study:

1	To support the economic, physical and social regeneration of Congleton by creating and securing jobs
2	To open up new development sites and improve access to Radnor Park Industrial Estate and Congleton Business Park
3	To relieve existing town centre traffic congestion / HGVs, remove traffic from less desirable roads and facilitate town centre regeneration
4	To improve strategic transport linkages across the Borough facilitating wider economic and transport benefit
5	To reduce community severance along key town centre corridors
6	To reduce traffic related pollutants within the towns declared Air Quality Management Areas

- 2.2 That the following solutions are taken forward to the second stage of detailed assessment to address the objectives of the study:

- Online improvements and widening of A34 Rood Hill, Clayton By-Pass, West Road and Holmes Chapel Road and junction improvements
- Isolated junction improvements to either A34 Rood Hill/A54 Rood Hill (signals), A34 Clayton Bypass/West Road/West Street (Rbt) or A34 West Road/A54 Holmes Chapel Road/A534 Sandbach Rd / A34 Newcastle Road (rbt)
- Network Management measures such as traffic signal optimisation
- Strategic signing strategy
- Traffic Management Strategy / Local signing strategy

- 'Partial' Link Road connecting A534/A54 to Viking Way
- 'Partial' Link Road connecting Viking Way to the A536 Macclesfield Road
- Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to A536 Macclesfield Road

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 To provide an evidenced based impartial assessment of the solutions / interventions that best address the study objectives.
- 3.2 To support any future statutory procedures in evidencing that the full range of alternatives have been examined.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Brereton Rural, Congleton East, Congleton West, Gawsworth, Odd Rode.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Brereton Rural – Cllr John Wray
 Congleton East – Cllr David Brown, Cllr Peter Mason and Cllr Andrew Thwaite
 Congleton West – Cllr Gordon Baxendale, Cllr Roland Domleo and Cllr David Topping
 Gawsworth – Cllr Lesley Smetham
 Odd Rode - Cllr Rhoda Bailey and Cllr Andrew Barratt

6.0 Policy Implications (including carbon reduction and health)

- 6.1 Department for Transport best practice on scheme appraisal has been adopted as part of the decision making process.
- 6.2 The next stage of feasibility work will consider in further detail the Policy implications of the remaining solutions.

7.0 Financial Implications (authorised by Director of Finance and Business Services)

- 7.1 None – this is an interim product / report of an approved feasibility study with funding in place from the Capital programme and Local Transport plan.

8.0 Legal Implications (authorised by Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 None

9.0 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 This process, by confirming the study objectives and taking a step by step objective assessment of all possible solutions minimises risk of future challenge to a preferred scheme.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The original objectives of the study were approved by in September 2012. These are tabulated below.

Objectives approved by Cabinet in September 2012	
1	To support the economic, physical and social regeneration of Congleton
2	To relieve existing town centre traffic congestion and HGVs and remove traffic from less desirable roads on the wider network
3	To open up new development sites
4	To create and secure jobs
5	To improve access to Radnor Park Industrial Estate and Congleton Business Park
6	To improve strategic transport linkages across the Borough facilitating wider economic and transport benefits including higher GVA and job creation
7	To reduce community severance along key town centre corridors
8	To reduce traffic related pollutants within the towns declared Air Quality Management Areas

- 10.2 Following approval to proceed with the study, one of the initial tasks undertaken was to review the problems, opportunities and constraints of the study. This was undertaken in a workshop environment with a wide range of internal stakeholders to capture as wide a range of issues / knowledge as possible.
- 10.3 The outputs of this workshop confirmed the broad objectives of the study. However, it was concluded that some of the objectives could be combined to reduce potential overlap of objectives.
- 10.4 This resulted in some minor proposed re-wording of the objectives as tabulated below:

Updated objectives following problems and issues workshop	
1	To support the economic, physical and social regeneration of Congleton by creating and securing jobs
2	To open up new development sites and improve access to Radnor Park Industrial Estate and Congleton Business Park
3	To relieve existing town centre traffic congestion / HGVs, remove traffic from less desirable roads and facilitate town centre regeneration
4	To improve strategic transport linkages across the Borough facilitating wider economic and transport benefit
5	To reduce community severance along key town centre corridors
6	To reduce traffic related pollutants within the towns declared Air Quality Management Areas

- 10.5 The workshop also agreed the 'problems' that require resolution to address the strategic objectives. These are tabulated below.

Problems identified within local area	
1	Congestion on the A34 corridor through Congleton
2	The A34 West Road, A34 Lower Heath and A34/A54 Rood Hill junction have been declared Air Quality Management Areas
3	A54 Rood Hill and the A34 Rood Hill to Lower Heath have been designated as 'Important Areas for Road Noise'
4	Severance along key town centre corridors including the A34
5	Lack of capacity to accommodate future development proposals
6	Use of inappropriate routes to avoid congestion on the A34
7	Conflicting traffic movements impact upon the operation of key routes, particularly the A34 Newcastle Road/A534 Sandbach Road/A54 Holmes Chapel Road/A34 West Road roundabout and the West Street/A34 Clayton bypass roundabout
8	Limited route choice for through traffic due to limited crossings of the River Dane
9	Difficulties in attracting inward investment due to traffic constraints in the town and fears of existing businesses relocating to sites with better transport links
10	Existing road network impacting upon development of strategic sites including Back Lane and Radnor Park, Congleton Business park, Giantswood Lane to Manchester Road and Manchester Road to Macclesfield Road

- 10.6 These study objectives and problems have been used identify a long list of potential improvement schemes that could alleviate identified problems and achieve the desired outcomes set out within the study objectives. At this stage all potential interventions were considered regardless of mode, scale or likely impact.
- 10.7 The full list of 28 potential interventions / solutions identified is tabulated below.

Initial list of potential interventions considered		
Online Highway improvements	1	Online improvements and widening of A34 Rood Hill, Clayton By-Pass, West Road and Holmes Chapel Road and junction improvements
	2	Online improvements to the A54 Rood Hill (Mountbatten Way arm)
	3	Implement a tidal flow scheme on the A34 corridor
	4	Isolated junction improvements to the: - A34 Rood Hill/A54 Rood Hill (Signals) - A34 Clayton Bypass/West Road/West Street (Roundabout) - A34 West Road/A54 Holmes Chapel Road/A534 Sandbach Rd / A34 Newcastle Road (Roundabout)
	5	Network Management measures such as signal optimisation, MOVA, SCOOT
	6	Strategic signing strategy
	7	Traffic Management Strategy / Local signing strategy
	8	Parking strategy
	9	HGV ban
	10	Online improvements to Sandy Lane/Chelford Road/Back Lane
	11	Rationalised junction strategy
	12	Online improvements to existing roads to the north of Congleton
Offline Highway Improvements	13	Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to A536 Macclesfield Road
	14	'Partial' Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to Viking Way
	15	'Partial' Link Road connecting Viking Way to the A536 Macclesfield Road
	16	Link Road to the south of Congleton
	17	Link Road to the east of Congleton
Public Transport Improvements	18	Bus service / facilities improvement
	19	Provision of Quality Bus Corridor(s)
	20	Provision of a Park and Ride facility in the town
	21	Additional financial support for existing services from Local Authority / other bodies
	22	Rail service / facilities improvement
	23	Promotion of existing facilities through marketing
Non Motorised Users	24	Promotion of existing walking and cycling facilities
	25	Improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities
	26	Public Realm Improvements
Sustainable Travel	27	Car Share Scheme
	28	Travel Planning (businesses, schools etc.)

10.8 An initial sift of options was undertaken based upon best practice DfT guidelines. The initial sift considered the following criteria:

- Contribution to identified problems and issues: the intervention should provide an overall positive contribution to the identified problems and issues
- Contribution to defined scheme objectives: : the intervention should provide an overall positive contribution to the objectives
- Deliverability: the intervention should be deliverable in theory (e.g. political, planning, timescale or third party issues)
- Feasibility: the intervention should be feasible in theory (e.g. physical constraint, land availability and design standards)

10.9 Full details of the initial sifting exercise are included at Appendix A.

10.10 Following this assessment the 12 options tabulated below were considered to **not** merit further consideration:

Potential interventions that fail initial screening		
Online Highway Improvements	2	Online improvements to the A54 Rood Hill (Mountbatten Way arm)
	3	Implement a tidal flow scheme on the A34 corridor
	8	Parking strategy
	9	HGV ban
Offline Highway Improvements	16	Link Road to the south of Congleton
	17	Link Road to the east of Congleton
	19	Provision of Quality Bus Corridor(s)
	20	Provision of a Park and Ride facility in the town
	21	Additional financial support for existing services from Local Authority / other bodies
	22	Rail service / facilities improvement
	23	Promotion of existing facilities through marketing

10.11 The remaining 16 potential interventions that met the initial screening criteria were then grouped based upon their potential contribution to the scheme objectives (tabulated below).

Potential interventions that pass initial screening		
Contribution to objectives	Schemes	
Low	10	Online improvements to Sandy Lane/Chelford Road/Back Lane
	11	Rationalised junction strategy
	12	Online improvements to existing roads to the north of Congleton
	18	Bus service / facilities improvement
	24	Promotion of existing walking and cycling facilities
	25	Improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities
	26	Public Realm Improvements
	27	Car Share Scheme
	28	Travel Planning (businesses, schools etc.)
Medium	1	Online improvements and widening of A34 Rood Hill, Clayton Bypass, West Road and Holmes Chapel Road and junction improvements
	4	Isolated junction improvements to the: - A34 Rood Hill/A54 Rood Hill (Signals) - A34 Clayton Bypass/West Road/West Street (Roundabout) - A34 West Road/A54 Holmes Chapel Road/A534 Sandbach Rd / A34 Newcastle Road (Roundabout)
	5	Network Management measures such as signal optimisation, MOVA, SCOOT
	6	Strategic signing strategy
	7	Traffic Management Strategy / Local signing strategy
	14	'Partial' Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to Viking Way
	15	'Partial' Link Road connecting Viking Way to the A536 Macclesfield Road
High	13	Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to A536 Macclesfield Road

10.12 Following this process it is recommended that the potential interventions that provide a **medium to high contribution to the objectives should be taken forward** for further detailed assessment as part of the Interventions report. Those schemes that scored three to nine against the scheme objectives in the appraisal process were considered to have a medium contribution towards the objectives, a score of ten or more represented a high score against objectives.

10.13 The Interventions report will define the scope of each of the remaining potential interventions in more detail, assess the potential impacts of each option in more detail (including potential environmental and engineering constraints and deliverability issues) and recommend a single solution for further development.

10.14 The Interventions report is programmed for consideration by Cabinet in May 2013.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Appendix A – Initial sift of options

Appraisal Scores

Problems

2	Large beneficial impact
1	Beneficial impact
0	Neutral / marginal impact
-1	Adverse impact
-2	Large adverse impact

Objectives

2	Large beneficial impact
1	Beneficial impact
0	Neutral / marginal impact
-1	Adverse impact
-2	Large adverse impact

Deliverability

(e.g. political, planning, timescale or third party issues)

Deliverable in theory
Deliverable but with challenges
Very difficult to deliver

Feasibility

(e.g. physical constraint, land availability and design standards)

Feasible in theory
Feasible but with challenges
Not feasible / significant challenges

Affordability

Affordable within available funding
Funding support required
Significant funding challenges

Public acceptability

Likely to be supported
Likely to receive mixed support
Likely to be unsupported

Sifting Criteria

Each option must meet the following sifting criteria to be considered further:

- 1: Provide an overall positive contribution to identified problems
- 2: Provide an overall positive contribution to the scheme objectives
- 3: Must be deliverable in theory
- 4: Must be feasible in theory

Additional Comments

- 16: This option is likely to require multiple structures in order to cross a railway line and the river. This is likely to lead to significant funding challenges.
- 17: This option is likely to require multiple structures in order to cross a railway line and the river. This is likely to lead to significant funding challenges.

Problems

- 1: Congestion on the A34 corridor through Congleton
- 2: The A34 West Road, A34 Lower Heath and A34/A54 Rood Hill junction have been declared Air Quality Management Areas
- 3: A54 Rood Hill and the A34 Rood Hill to Lower Heath have been designated as 'Important Areas for Road Noise'
- 4: Severance along key town centre corridors including the A34
- 5: Lack of capacity to accommodate future development proposals
- 6: Use of inappropriate routes to avoid congestion on the A34
- 7: Conflicting traffic movements impact upon the operation of key routes, particularly the A34 Newcastle Road/A534 Sandbach Road/A54 Holmes Chapel Road/A34 West Road roundabout and the West Street/A34 Clayton bypass roundabout
- 8: Limited route choice for through traffic due to limited crossings of the River Dane
- 9: Difficulties in attracting inward investment due to traffic constraints in the town and fears of existing businesses relocating to sites with better transport links
- 10: Existing road network impacting upon development of strategic sites including Back Lane and Radnor Park, Congleton Business Park, Giantswood Lane to Manchester Road and Manchester Road to Macclesfield Road

Objectives

- 1: To support the economic, physical and social regeneration of Congleton by creating and securing jobs
- 2: To relieve existing town centre traffic congestion / HGVs, remove traffic from less desirable roads and facilitate town centre regeneration.
- 3: To open up new development sites and improve access to Radnor Park Industrial Estate and Congleton Business Park
- 4: To improve strategic transport linkages across the Borough facilitating wider economic and transport benefits
- 5: To reduce community severance along key town centre corridors
- 6: To reduce traffic related pollutants within the towns declared Air Quality Management Areas

Mode / Type	Reference	Option	Problems											Objectives						Desirability	Feasibility	Public Acceptability	Affordability	Sifting Criteria				
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6					Total	1	2	3	4
Online Highway improvements	1	Online improvements to the A34 Rood Hill, Clayton By-Pass, West Road and Holmes Chapel Road	2	0	0	-1	1	1	1	0	1	1	6	1	1	1	1	-1	0	3					✓	✓	✓	✓
	2	Online improvements to the A54 Rood Hill	0	0	0	-1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	-1	0	0					✗	✗	✓	✓
	3	Implement a tidal flow scheme on the A34 corridor	1	0	0	-1	0	1	1	0	1	1	4	0	1	0	0	-1	0	0					✓	✗	✓	✗
	4	Isolated junction improvements to the: A34 Rood Hill/A54 Rood Hill (sigs) A34 Clayton Bypass/West Road/West Street (Rbt) A34 West Road/A54 Holmes Chapel Road/A534 Sandbach Rd / A34 Newcastle Road (rbt)	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	5	0	1	1	0	0	1	3					✓	✓	✓	✓
	5	Network Management measures such as signal optimisation, MOVA, SCOOT	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	8	0	1	0	0	1	1	3					✓	✓	✓	✓
	6	Strategic signing strategy	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	7	0	1	0	1	0	1	3					✓	✓	✓	✓
	7	Traffic Management Strategy / Local signing strategy	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	9	0	1	0	1	1	1	4					✓	✓	✓	✓
	8	Parking strategy	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					✓	✗	✓	✓
	9	HGV ban	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	1	1	3					✓	✓	✓	✗
	10	Online improvements to Sandy Lane/Chelford Road/Back Lane	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1					✓	✓	✓	✓
	11	Rationalised junction strategy	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	6	0	1	0	0	1	0	2					✓	✓	✓	✓
Offline Highway Improvements	12	Online improvements to existing roads to the north of Congleton	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	2					✓	✓	✓	✓
	13	Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to A536 Macclesfield Road	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20	1	2	2	2	2	2	11					✓	✓	✓	✓
	14	'Partial' Link Road connecting A534 Sandbach Road to Viking Way	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	9	1	0	2	0	1	1	5					✓	✓	✓	✓
	15	'Partial' Link Road connecting Viking Way to the A536 Macclesfield Road	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	7	1	0	1	0	1	1	4					✓	✓	✓	✓
	16	Link Road to the south of Congleton	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	2	2	17	1	1	0	2	2	2	8					✓	✓	✗	✗
Public Transport Improvements	17	Link Road to the east of Congleton	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	6	1	0	0	1	0	1	3					✓	✓	✗	✗
	18	Bus service / facilities improvement	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1					✓	✓	✓	✓
	19	Provision of Quality Bus Corridor(s)	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	6	0	0	0	1	0	1	2					✓	✓	✗	✗
	20	Provision of a Park and Ride facility in the town	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	1	2					✓	✓	✓	✗
	21	Additional financial support for existing services from Local Authority / other bodies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					✗	✗	✓	✓
	22	Rail service / facilities improvement	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	1	4					✓	✓	✗	✓
	23	Promotion of existing facilities through marketing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					✗	✗	✓	✓
Non Motorised Users	24	Promotion of existing walking and cycling facilities	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1					✓	✓	✓	✓
	25	Improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1					✓	✓	✓	✓
	26	Public Realm Improvements	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	2					✓	✓	✓	✓
Sustainable Travel	27	Car Share Scheme	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	7	0	1	0	0	0	1	2					✓	✓	✓	✓
	28	Travel Planning (businesses, schools etc.)	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	2					✓	✓	✓	✓

Objectives are driven by the identified problems hence significant overlap.