

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

12 February 2020

Warwickshire Major Road Network (MRN) Proposed Programme and Priorities

Recommendation(s)

1. That Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of this report which shows how the Major Road Network (MRN) proposals in Warwickshire integrate with national and Local Transport Plan objectives and sets out the proposed prioritisation for scheme development.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 On 19th June 2019, Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the Warwickshire Major Road Network (MRN) – Proposed Programme and Priorities which had previously been considered by Cabinet on 11th June 2019.
- 1.2 The original report recommended that Cabinet:
 - 1) Agrees the proposed Warwickshire Major Road Network (MRN) programme and priorities;
 - 2) Approves the submission of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the proposed A426/A4071 Avon Mill/Hunters Lane Improvement scheme in Rugby as the initial MRN priority for delivery during the period 2020-2025; and
 - 3) Notes scheme development work already undertaken or in progress on the other initial priority schemes and proposed longer-term priorities for delivery during the next MRN period 2025-2030.
- 1.3 In accordance with the Cabinet resolution to approve recommendation 2 above, the SOBC for the proposed Avon Mill/Hunters Lane scheme was submitted to Midlands Connect by the deadline of 5th July 2019.
- 1.4 The other proposed priorities set out in the Cabinet Report were as follows:
 - (a) Proposed delivery during MRN Period 1 (2020-2025):**
 - (i) A452 Thickthorn Island to Bericote Road Roundabout Corridor Improvements, Kenilworth.
 - (ii) A444 Nuneaton Town Centre (part of Transforming Nuneaton project).

(b) Proposed delivery during MRN Period 2 (2025-2030):

- (iii) A435 between Alcester and Gorcott Hill.
- (iv) A446 Coleshill/Hams Hall.
- (v) A426 Leicester Road Corridor, Rugby.
- (vi) A4071 Blue Boar to Potsford Dam Roundabout south west of Rugby.

1.5 It should be noted that the purpose of MRN scheme prioritisation at this stage is to enable officers to programme further development work. Significant further work will be required on all potential MRN schemes so that they may be:

- (i) Considered by Midlands Connect for inclusion in its Regional Evidence Base submission to Government for potential delivery during MRN Period 2 (2025-2030), or
- (ii) Progressed through other potential funding opportunities which may arise (e.g. Housing Infrastructure Fund).

1.6 Following the discussion of the Cabinet Report, Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that it:

- 1) Commissions a report that considers how the Major Road Network proposals fit into Warwickshire County Council's wider transport strategy, including how Major Road Network Projects will contribute towards meeting the goals of Warwickshire County Council's Local Transport Plan in particular to reduce climate change emissions and encourage modal shift.
- 2) Publishes appropriate supporting evidence for each scheme as soon as possible and if necessary re-evaluate the prioritisation of the schemes and investigate alternatives.

1.7 This report addresses the above recommendations.

2.0 Options and Proposal

(a) Background

2.1 In July 2017, the Government's Transport Investment Strategy included a commitment to create a 'Major Road Network' (MRN) comprising the busiest and most economically important local authority 'A' roads in England.

2.2 In December 2018, DfT confirmed that the MRN in Warwickshire includes the A446/A4097, A435/A4023, A426/A4071, A444/A47, A452 and A45 (south of the M45) as shown on the plan in **Appendix 1**.

2.3 Funding for schemes to improve the MRN is being made available by DfT via a competitive regional bidding process which is co-ordinated locally by

Midlands Connect, the Shadow Sub-National Transport Body (STB) for the pan-Midlands area.

- 2.4 The potential DfT contribution for those individual MRN schemes which are shortlisted by Midlands Connect and subsequently approved by DfT following submission of compelling business case evidence will normally be between £20 million and £50 million.
- 2.5 Schemes seeking a contribution of more than £50 million are dealt with as potential Large Local Major Schemes (LLMs) by DfT.
- 2.6 The MRN has five objectives which build on the commitments within the Government’s Transport Investment Strategy¹. DfT Investment Planning Guidance² identifies the criteria against which potential MRN schemes will be assessed against these objectives, as shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 – National MRN Objectives and Assessment Criteria

Objective	Criteria
Reducing Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleviate Congestion • Take account for impacts on air quality, biodiversity, noise, flood risk, water quality, landscape and cultural heritage sites
Support Economic Growth & Rebalancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial Strategy: Supports regional strategic goals to boost economic growth • Economic Impact: Improve ability to access new or existing employment sites • Trade & Gateways Impact: Improve international connectivity, e.g. access to ports & airports
Support Housing Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the creation of new housing developments by improving access to future development sites and boosting suitable land capacity
Supporting All Road Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering benefits for public transport and non-motorised users, including cyclists, pedestrians and people with a disability • Safety Benefits: Ability to reduce the risk of deaths/serious injuries for all users of the MRN
Supporting the SRN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved end to end journey times across both networks • Improved journey time reliability • Improved SRN resilience

2.7 The types of scheme eligible to bid for MRN funding are:

- Bypasses or new alignments which alleviate congestion on the MRN and make through journeys quicker, safer and more reliable.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-investment-strategy>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765680/mrn-investment-planning-guidance.pdf

- Missing Links – new roads that link existing stretches of the MRN or Strategic Road Network (SRN).
 - Widening of existing MRN roads where there is a known congestion point or safety risk.
 - Major structural renewals on roads, bridges, tunnels and viaducts on MRN roads, where significant work needs to be done to renew the carriageway or prevent closure or weight restrictions.
 - Major junction improvements such as a grade separation that would improve the safety, performance or flow of an MRN road.
 - Variable message signs, traffic management and the use of smart technology and data to raise the performance of the MRN.
 - Packages of improvements to the MRN which may include elements of safety, widening, junction improvements and new alignment.
- 2.8 DfT also require MRN investment proposals to consider the needs of cyclists, pedestrians, people with impaired mobility and public transport users, and the anticipated benefits for them delivered as part of any scheme.
- 2.9 DfT guidance, ‘A better deal for bus users’³ also includes a specific commitment requiring all new road investments receiving government funding to explicitly address bus priority measures to improve bus journey times and reliability.
- 2.10 All emerging MRN projects in Warwickshire comprise multi-modal solutions to local transport problems and reflect these national objectives.
- 2.11 Schemes on roads which are not on the MRN or are wholly on the SRN will not be eligible for MRN funding.
- 2.12 The guidance also notes that Large Public Transport (only) schemes are not eligible for MRN funding due to other Government funding opportunities being available such as the Transforming Cities Fund.

(b) MRN Regional Prioritisation Process

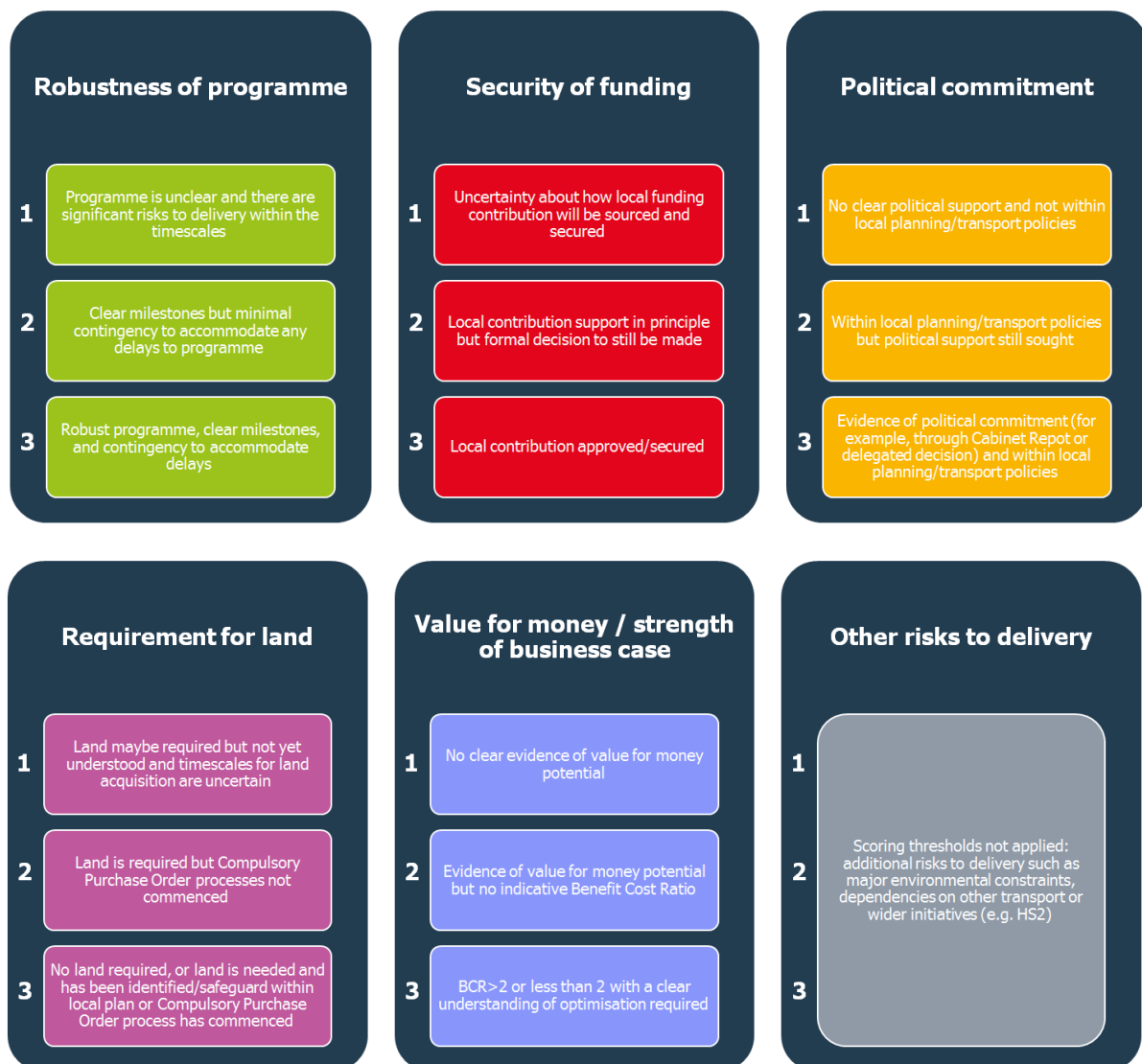
- 2.13 In order for a scheme to be considered for MRN scheme funding by DfT, it must be included in the Midlands Connect Regional Evidence Base (REB). The County Council itself cannot therefore submit bids for MRN funding directly to DfT.
- 2.14 In July 2019, Midlands Connect submitted its REB to DfT for MRN Period 1 (2020-2025)⁴. This included the A426/A4071 Avon Mill/Hunters Lane Improvements in Rugby as one of seven MRN priority schemes from across the region. Critically, all of these schemes were at a sufficiently advanced stage to enable delivery during MRN Period 1 and were also supported by a strong business case.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-better-deal-for-bus-users/a-better-deal-for-bus-users>

⁴ https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/media/1603/major-road-network-regional-evidence-base_website-final.pdf

- 2.15 It is anticipated that the REB is likely to remain the mechanism by which Midlands Connect will submit future funding bids for potential schemes to DfT for MRN period 2 (2025-2030). Midlands Connect will therefore continue to assess and recommend which schemes from across the region to include in the REB on the basis of its evaluation process.
- 2.16 It is important to note that even if the County Council prioritises a scheme, there is no guarantee that Midlands Connect will include a funding bid in its REB submission to DfT. The County Council will however continue to engage closely with Midlands Connect so that it is aware of its emerging plans and priorities.
- 2.17 **Figure 1** below shows the deliverability criteria used by Midlands Connect to prioritise schemes for delivery during MRN Period 1 (2020-2025)⁵.

Figure 1 – MRN Deliverability Criteria



⁵ https://www.midlandsconnect.uk/media/1603/major-road-network-regional-evidence-base_website-final.pdf

- 2.18 A three-point scale was used to score each scheme against each of the deliverability criteria, with each score given a qualitative definition.
- 2.19 Each scheme was also assessed by Midlands Connect in terms of its alignment with regional priorities and support for national MRN objectives.

(c) Re-evaluation of MRN Priorities in Warwickshire

- 2.20 This report includes a re-evaluation of MRN scheme priorities in Warwickshire using national MRN objectives/criteria referred to previously and the current Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives, in particular the need to reduce transport emissions and encourage modal shift.
- 2.21 The LTP has six objectives and there is a broad level of consistency between these and national MRN objectives as shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 – Consistency between National and Local Policy Objectives

Objective	National MRN Criteria	Warwickshire County Council Local Transport Plan 3 Objectives
Reducing Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleviate Congestion • Take account for impacts on air quality, biodiversity, noise, flood risk, water quality, landscape and cultural heritage sites 	LTP 6 - To reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, and address the need to adapt to climate change
Support Economic Growth & Rebalancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial Strategy: Supports regional strategic goals to boost economic growth • Economic Impact: Improve ability to access new or existing employment sites • Trade & Gateways Impact: Improve international connectivity, e.g. access to ports & airports 	LTP 2 - To seek reliable and efficient transport networks which will help promote full employment and a strong sustainable local and sub-regional economy.
Support Housing Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the creation of new housing developments by improving access to future development sites and boosting suitable land capacity 	
Supporting All Road Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering benefits for public transport and non-motorised users, including cyclists, pedestrians and people with a disability • Safety Benefits: Ability to 	<p>LTP 1 - To promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens in order to promote a fairer, more inclusive society.</p> <p>LTP 5 - To encourage integration of transport, both</p>

	reduce the risk of deaths/serious injuries for all users of the MRN	in terms of policy planning and the physical interchange of modes; LTP 4 - To improve the safety, security and health of people by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health.
Supporting the SRN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved end to end journey times across both networks • Improved journey time reliability • Improved SRN resilience 	LTP3 - To reduce the impact of transport on people and the [built and natural] environment and improve the journey experience of transport users.

- 2.22 Given this broad consistency, Objectives LTP 1-5 have been accounted for under the relevant national objectives for the purposes of this re-evaluation to reduce the potential for duplication.
- 2.23 Objective LTP 6 (to reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, and address the need to adapt to climate change) is assessed as a separate criterion following the County Council's recent declaration of a Climate Emergency in July 2019.
- 2.24 Each scheme has also been assessed using the Midlands Connect deliverability criteria referred to above with the addition of scoring thresholds to 'Other Risks to Delivery'.
- 2.25 Although these criteria may be revised in future, scheme promoters seeking to ensure their proposals are prioritised through the REB process will need to demonstrate to Midlands Connect that their schemes are likely to be deliverable. It is therefore considered appropriate to include them in the scheme re-evaluation process.
- 2.26 The results of the re-evaluation process including an explanation of the individual scores are included in **Appendix 2** of this report.
- 2.27 A summary of the results is presented below for each scheme under a description of the emerging proposals and links to the appropriate evidence base where available. It should be noted that schemes are at various stages of development but typically are very much in their infancy and will require significant further work to bring them forward for delivery.
- 2.28 Local Members will be invited to input into the scheme development process at the appropriate time via a series of members' seminars/workshops.

(i) A46/A452 Thickthorn Island to Bericote Road Roundabout Corridor Improvements, Kenilworth.

- 2.29 The scheme is at a relatively early stage of development and comprises an integrated package of highway and sustainable transport improvements on the A452 corridor. The section of the route between the A46 Thickthorn Island and the Bericote Road junction carries an average of 27,000 vehicles per day including 12 buses per hour in each direction.
- 2.30 An integral element of the scheme comprises a high-quality pedestrian/cycle route which will form part of the overall 'K2L' cycle scheme, a key LTP priority providing the most direct and convenient route for cyclists travelling between Kenilworth and Leamington Spa. The K2L proposals are currently being progressed for delivery ahead of the wider MRN scheme having been awarded £4.749 million from the County Council's Capital Investment Fund and the scheme is now moving into the detail design phase.
- 2.31 This approach will ensure that the benefits of the K2L scheme can be achieved at the earliest possible opportunity and removes any reliance on the wider Thickthorn Island to Bericote Road Roundabout Corridor Improvements scheme coming forward. Steps are being taken to ensure that any abortive works on the cycle route that may be necessitated to accommodate the future road scheme are kept to a minimum.
- 2.32 As well as providing a key sustainable transport link between the two towns, the cycle route will assist a range of journeys on the Leamington – Kenilworth – Coventry corridor, including to the University of Warwick, Stoneleigh Park and JLR Whitley.
- 2.33 It should be noted that there remain some significant design and construction challenges which will need to be overcome before the K2L scheme can progress, particularly in relation to provision of a new bridge over the River Avon for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 2.34 The highway elements of the scheme comprise provision of a dual carriageway between Thickthorn Island and Bericote Road roundabout with bus priority measures which will reduce congestion and improve journey times for all road users.
- 2.35 The scheme will complement developer-funded proposals to improve Thickthorn Island and the St John's Gyratory in Kenilworth, both of which are expected to be delivered by 2023/24.
- 2.36 Traffic modelling commissioned by the County Council has shown that provision of the dual carriageway scheme and improvements to Thickthorn Island will address a serious road safety concern as queuing traffic currently blocks back from the roundabout off-slips onto the A46 mainline. This situation is predicted to worsen over the next 10 years as a result of local housing and employment growth as well as increased use of the A46 as a strategic corridor of economic activity and growth.

- 2.37 If the existing bridge over the River Avon is struck by a vehicle or requires major maintenance, the impacts of an extended closure would be extremely damaging to the local and sub-regional economy, with potentially serious environmental and safety impacts as traffic would be displaced onto unsuitable residential routes. The highway elements of the scheme would deliver a second river crossing and therefore provide greater network resilience.
- 2.38 There are further aspirations for a northern Leamington Park and Ride facility on the corridor which will be considered in more detail as the scheme is further developed.
- 2.39 The results of the re-evaluation process show that the overall scheme performs well against national and local policy objectives. Further work is required to ensure it is capable of being delivered towards the end of MRN Period 1 (2020-2025) or early during MRN Period 2 (2025-2030).
- 2.40 The scheme scores 25 out of a possible maximum 33 points as shown in **Table 1** in **Appendix 2**, and is ranked second in terms of relative priority.
- 2.41 The various scheme elements are outlined in Table 2 of the Kenilworth Development Brief⁶.

(ii) A444 Nuneaton Town Centre Improvements (part of Transforming Nuneaton project).

- 2.42 This scheme is at a relatively early stage of development and is being promoted by the County Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council as part of the wider Transforming Nuneaton project. Key transport elements of the project which are located on the MRN itself or in close proximity comprise the following:
- Re-configuration of the ring road in the vicinity of the rail station including consideration of options for improving access for all modes by removal of the current gyratory / one-way system.
 - Widening of the ring road at Vicarage Street / Church Street and over the River Anker near Coton Road in order to bring the eastern side of the ring road to dual carriageway standard, linking the A444 Coton Road to the Local Plan development sites allocated to the north east of Nuneaton.
 - Provision of potential new bus bridge over the River Anker to facilitate the re-development of the bus station site, or provision of a new bus interchange at the rail station.

6

https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/download/1087/land_east_of_kenilworth_development_brief

- Improvements to the rail station, including provision of a new northern access for pedestrians and cyclists from Weddington Terrace.
 - Improved public transport and cycle provision through the town centre.
 - Junction improvement at Corporation Street/Roanne Ringway.
- 2.43 A consultants study is currently being undertaken to identify a preferred package of measures and is due to be completed in early 2020. The County Council secured £7.5 million of funding in 2018 from the Government's Local Growth Fund through CWLEP, part of which has been allocated to progress the transport scheme development work referred to above. Further funding has been allocated by the County Council towards the development of the overall project.
- 2.44 The results of the scheme re-evaluation process show that the overall scheme performs well against national and local policy objectives. Further work is underway to ensure it is capable of being delivered towards the end of MRN Period 1 (2020-2025) or early during MRN Period 2 (2025-2030).
- 2.45 The scheme scores 26 out of a possible maximum 33 points as shown in **Table 2** in **Appendix 2**, and is ranked first in terms of relative priority.
- 2.46 A range of documents providing background information on the wider Transforming Nuneaton project is available on a dedicated webpage⁷.

(iii) A435 Corridor Improvements between Alcester and Gorcott Hill

- 2.47 Officers are in the initial stages of developing a joint MRN initiative with Worcestershire County Council which seeks to address the serious and long-standing traffic and environmental problems affecting the A435 corridor between Alcester and Gorcott Hill and capacity constraints on the parallel A441 corridor in Redditch.
- 2.48 It is envisaged that options for reducing traffic volumes and environmental impacts on the A435 corridor will enable public realm and sustainable transport improvements to be introduced on relieved sections of route, thus 'locking-in' a range of social and environmental benefits.
- 2.49 It is proposed to commission a joint A435/A441 study in early 2020 to identify potential scheme options for initial evaluation and sifting, before shortlisting options for further consideration in an 'Options Assessment Report' (OAR) which is a key requirement of MRN/LLM scheme development.
- 2.50 The OAR will become an integral element in future business case submissions to Midlands Connect and is expected to include a

⁷ <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/regeneration-projects/transforming-nuneaton/5?documentId=672&categoryId=20130>

complementary package of measures covering both the A435 and A441 corridors given their close functional relationship.

- 2.51 In view of the current embryonic stage of scheme development, the need for wider engagement to secure local public and political support and the considerable length of time required to develop and secure funding for major transport schemes, it is extremely unlikely that a preferred package of measures could be brought forward for delivery during MRN period 1 (2020-2025).
- 2.52 Additionally, given the likely significant costs involved in scheme development and delivery, it is also anticipated that proposals for the A435/A441 corridors will need to be prioritised and delivered in phases.
- 2.53 A notional package of schemes has been assessed and scores 18 out of a possible maximum 33 points as shown in **Table 3** in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.54 Although the package is ranked fifth in terms of relative priority which is primarily due to the factors outlined above, officers are currently working with Worcestershire County Council to identify a phased programme of improvements given the urgent need to address environmental impacts in the area.
- 2.55 Subject to the points noted above, this might allow a first phase of improvements to come forward for the A435 corridor during MRN period 2 (2025-2030).
- 2.56 No background documents are currently available as a preferred package of schemes has yet to be identified by the OAR Study referred to above.

(iv)A446 Coleshill/Hams Hall Corridor Improvements.

- 2.57 An indicative scheme has been developed which would upgrade a key 'pinch-point' on the southern section of the A446 corridor between Hams Hall (south of Faraday Avenue) and Gorsey Lane near Coleshill from single to dual carriageway standard.
- 2.58 It is envisaged that the scheme would include dedicated pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure along the length of the proposed dual carriageway, to provide a connection from both Water Orton and Curdworth to Hams Hall. There is existing cycling provision on Faraday Avenue from the A446 / Hams Hall roundabout, meaning that the above provision could enable a continuous cycle link to be provided between Water Orton / Curdworth and the various employment facilities at Hams Hall.
- 2.59 The measures outlined above would complement the County Council's aspirations to enhance the role of Coleshill Parkway as a more significant strategic Park and Ride facility which is currently being promoted by Midlands Connect as a measure to remove car-based trips from the Midlands Motorway Hub. A Strategic Outline Business Case has been prepared for a major

expansion of parking at the station. Discussions are taking place between the County Council and Midlands Connect to agree how to take these proposals forward.

- 2.60 It is proposed to develop the package of highway and sustainable transport improvements on the A446 south of Hams Hall for delivery following HS2 Phase 1 construction. The duration of this initial construction phase is now likely to take place over a longer period of time following the Government's decision to review the HS2 project. An announcement on the outcome of this review is expected in early 2020.
- 2.61 The A446 package will not only support planned growth within North Warwickshire and Birmingham, but will also facilitate enhanced access to the wider UK Central area. This includes Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Resorts World and the Genting Arena.
- 2.62 Officers are working closely with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Highways England and North Warwickshire Borough Council on a joint study to review the cumulative impacts of the Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) and wider growth across the Borough on M42 Junction 9 and the surrounding area including the A446 corridor between Gorsey Lane and M42 Junction 9 and the A4097 corridor which is also part of the MRN.
- 2.63 This M42 Junction 9 Area Study is considering the full impact of growth associated with the Peddimore employment site and Langley Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE), and will also look at other potential growth sites in the area and the mitigation that would be required to address their cumulative impacts on the transport network.
- 2.64 Critical locations identified by the study include M42 Junction 9 itself, the A446 corridor both north and south of this junction and also the A4097 corridor between the M42 and Minworth Island which passes through Curdworth. This section of the A4097 is likely to experience environmental and community severance issues which will require an appropriate package of transport interventions to be identified.
- 2.65 The scheme scores 21 out of a possible maximum 33 points as shown in **Table 4 in Appendix 2**, and is ranked third in terms of relative priority.
- 2.66 Further work is required to develop the scheme elements for inclusion in an Options Assessment Report in support of a scheme business case.

(v) A4071/A426 Corridor between Blue Boar Interchange and A5 Gibbet Hill Roundabout.

- 2.67 A feasibility study is currently evaluating options for potential additional interventions over and above those already proposed for A426 Leicester Road on the northern section of the corridor as part of the mitigation strategy for the recently adopted Rugby Local Plan.

- 2.68 Options include possible access improvements into the Swift Valley employment area, carriageway widening and a high-level review of potential bus priority and demand management measures including park and ride.
- 2.69 The southern section of the A4071 corridor between Blue Boar and Potsford Dam Roundabout is likely to constrain future housing and employment growth in Rugby due to capacity and safety problems at the following key locations:
- A45/A4071 Blue Boar Interchange – existing junction layout significantly constrains exit capacity.
 - A4071 Cawston Bends - insufficient carriageway width which narrows to less than 7m with HGVs mounting the verge to avoid colliding with oncoming vehicles.
 - A4071/B4642 Potsford Dam Roundabout – profile requires remediation.
- 2.70 The County Council is seeking funding contributions from the South West Rugby developers towards improving National Cycle Network Route 41, which links Potsford Dam with Draycote Water. This would require provision of a surfaced cycle track along the former railway line as part of the development of the wider National Cycle Network between Rugby and Leamington Spa.
- 2.71 Officers are currently working with the promoter of large scale B8 employment provision at South West Rugby to identify a preferred alignment for the proposed Potsford Dam Link connecting the A45/M45 at Thurlaston with the A4071 Rugby Western Relief Road (RWRR).
- 2.72 The developer is currently promoting an option for the link which would connect its northern section directly onto Potsford Dam Roundabout. This option includes provision for enlarging the roundabout which could in turn enable its profile to be improved. It is anticipated that these proposals will be developer-funded.
- 2.73 The County Council is proposing to develop MRN options for addressing capacity and safety problems at Cawston Bends and for rationalising movements at Blue Boar Interchange. These improvements would complement the Potsford Dam Link and associated roundabout improvements referred to above.
- 2.74 The scheme scores 19 out of a possible maximum 33 points as shown in **Table 5 in Appendix 2**, and is ranked fourth in terms of relative priority.
- 2.75 There are currently no background documents available as potential scheme options for improving the A426 Leicester Road corridor are currently undergoing a feasibility assessment. Potential options for improving the A4071 Cawston Bends and Blue Boar Interchange have also yet to be identified.

3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 DfT Guidance notes that schemes should aim for a local or third-party contribution of at least 15% of total scheme costs. Based on a potential MRN funding offer of between £20 million to £50 million per scheme, this would equate to a local contribution of between £3 million and £7.5 million in each case, depending upon total scheme costs.
- 3.2 Third-party contributions could come from developer contributions but are also likely to require direct investment by the County Council in order to secure the MRN funding from DfT.
- 3.3 There are significant costs involved in developing business cases to support MRN funding bids to DfT. For the A426/A4071 Avon Mill/Hunters Lane Improvements, total development costs for producing the Outline Business Case (OBC) which is the next stage in the process are currently estimated at approximately £300,000.
- 3.4 Officers have advised Midlands Connect that they will be seeking a further DfT funding contribution of £250,000 and are proposing a local funding contribution of £50,000 towards developing the Outline and Full Business Case (OBC/FBC) submissions.
- 3.5 As noted earlier, there may be opportunities to secure further S106 developer funding contributions towards MRN investment, although the availability of significant funding from this source is largely dependent on the location of development, its scale, phasing and associated triggers for payment.

4.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4.1 It is proposed to inform Cabinet of the proposed scheme priorities to enable officers to develop a work programme for the various MRN projects.

Background papers

None.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Nicholas Dauncey	nickdauncey@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: (01926) 412737
Assistant Director	David Ayton-Hill	davidayton-hill@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: (01926) 418603
Strategic Director	Mark Ryder	markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: (01926) 412811
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jeff Clarke	jeffclarke@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: (02475) 012731