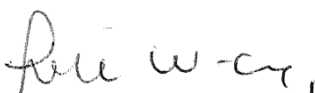


Date of issue: Wednesday, 3 November 2021

MEETING	BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY	
	Member	Authority
	Councillor Anderson	Slough Borough Council
	Councillor Brunel-Walker	Bracknell Forest Council
	Councillor Clark	The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
	Councillor Jorgensen	Wokingham Borough Council
	Councillor Page	Reading Borough Council
	Councillor Somner	West Berkshire Council
	Stuart Atkinson	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Laura Fitzgerald	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Malcolm Kempton	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Bob Mountain	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Nawacki	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
	Simon Ratcliffe	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
DATE AND TIME:	THURSDAY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 2021 AT 4.00 PM	
VENUE:	VIRTUAL MEETING	
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NICHOLAS PONTONE 07749 709 868	

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



JOSIE WRAGG
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART 1

AGENDA
ITEM

REPORT TITLE

PAGE

Apologies for absence.



sustainable
forest

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1.	Declarations of Interest	-
	<i>It is a principle of the BLTB that the interests of the Thames Valley Berkshire area will take precedence over a member's own interests or those of their nominating authority.</i>	
	<i>All members must declare, and take relevant action, if they believe they have a pecuniary or other interest on a matter to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the nominating authority or LEP.</i>	
	<i>The Chair will invite any member representing a local authority seeking financial approval for a scheme to declare that interest.</i>	
2.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th July 2021	1 - 6
3.	Briefing Note - TVB/BLTB 'How We Work'	7 - 8
4.	Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015/16 to 2020/21	9 - 22
5.	2.10 Slough: A332 Windsor Road Improvements - One Year Evaluation Report	23 - 54
6.	2.12 Reading: South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) phases 1 & 2 - One Year Evaluation Report	55 - 86
7.	2.15 Bracknell: Martins Heron Roundabout - One Year Evaluation Report	87 - 120
8.	2.21 Slough: Langley Station Access - One Year Evaluation Report	121 - 152
9.	Transport for the South East - Subscription Report Update	153 - 160
10.	BLTB Forward Plan	161 - 162
11.	Date of Next Meeting - 10th March 2022	-

Press and Public

Attendance and accessibility: You are welcome to observe this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer via the live stream. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer if you have any problems accessing the live stream.

Webcasting and recording: The public part of the meeting will be filmed by the Council for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The footage will remain on our website for 12 months. A copy of the recording will also be retained in accordance with the Council's data retention policy.



Berkshire Local Transport Body – Meeting held on Thursday, 15th July, 2021.

Present:-

Councillor Brunel-Walker	Bracknell Forest Council
Councillor Clark	RBWM
Councillor Jorgensen	Wokingham Borough Council
Councillor Page	Reading Borough Council
Councillor Swindlehurst (deputy)	Slough Borough Council
Stuart Atkinson	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Laura Fitzgerald	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Bob Mountain	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Nigel Nawacki	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP
Simon Ratcliffe	Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

Also present:- Adele Taylor – RBWM (LEP Accountable Body S151)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Somner and Malcolm Kempton

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

It was noted that Councillors Brunel-Walker and Swindlehurst were elected members of local authorities seeking financial approval for schemes on the agenda, but they did not have disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests and would participate and vote on these matters.

2. Election of Chair for 2021/22

Nominations were invited for the Chair of BLTB for the forthcoming municipal year. The Founding Document stated that a Local Authority Member should chair BLTB.

Councillor Page was proposed by Councillor Swindlehurst and seconded by Councillor Brunel-Walker.

There being no other nominations, Councillor Page was elected as Chair for the next year.

Resolved – That Councillor Page be elected as Chair of BLTB for the 2021/22 municipal year.

(Councillor Page in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting)

3. Election of Vice-Chair for 2021/22

Nominations were invited for the Vice-Chair of BLTB for the forthcoming municipal year. It was confirmed that the Founding Document of the BLTB required that the Vice-Chair be from the Local Enterprise Partnership members.

Berkshire Local Transport Body - 15.07.21

Bob Mountain was proposed by Councillor Page and seconded by Simon Ratcliffe.

There being no other nominations, Bob Mountain was elected as Vice-Chair for the next year.

Resolved – That Bob Mountain be elected as Vice-Chair of BLTB for the 2021/22 municipal year.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th March 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Berkshire Local Transport Body held on 11th March 2021 be approved as a correct record.

5. Briefing Note - TVB/BLTB 'How We Work'

Members noted a briefing note that summarised the process by which Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and the Berkshire Local Transport Body operated in investing in local transport schemes.

Resolved – That the BLTB 'How We Work' briefing note be noted.

6. Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015-16 to 2020-21

A report was received on the progress of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal schemes.

The overall programme totalled £174.1m which comprised £135.9m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) Deal funding; £36m of Business Rates Retention Pilot in 2018/19 and 2019/20; and £2.1m from the Getting Building Fund for two transport schemes. In relation to the GBF funding it was noted that the Slough Langley High Street Phase 3 which had now received full financial approval as the conditions agreed by BLTB in November 2020 had been met. The use of the remaining £450,000 would be considered in a report later on the agenda.

Members had previously requested a more detailed breakdown of the types of schemes in Table 3 of the report to clarify the spend on sustainable transport schemes. A more detailed table was tabled which showed that £6.9m of LGF had been invested directly into cycle projects. It was noted that several other schemes included improvements to sustainable transport modes. The detailed breakdown would be included in future reports.

BLTB reviewed each of the uncompleted schemes and noted as follows:

2.01 Newbury: Kings Road Link Road – the completion date had been delayed due to planning issues and was now due to be December 2021.

2.05 Newbury: Sandford Park – the scheme was ahead of schedule and was expected to be completed by late August 2021.

2.06 Reading: Green Park Railway Station – construction was due to be completed by October 2021 but it wasn't expected to open to the public until 2022 due to Network Rail processes. The scheme promoter would continue to discuss these directly with rail partners to open the station as soon as possible.

2.16 Maidenhead Station Access – update noted. The scheme was rated 'green' and was due to be completed in August 2021.

2.23 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 3 and 4 – update noted.

2.24 Newbury: Railway Station improvements – there had been some delays but good progress was now being made, including that work on the northern cycle hub was underway. A planning application had been submitted for the business units.

2.27 Maidenhead Town Centre: Missing Links – the scheme was expected to be completed in October 2021.

2.29 Wokingham: Winnersh Triangle Park and Ride – some delays had been experienced due to a change of contractor, however, it was now due for completion in January 2022.

2.31 Slough: Stoke Road Area Regeneration – work on the station forecourt had commenced earlier in the week and other detailed work had taken place with completion due by March 2022.

2.32 Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Works Phase 1 – completion was expected by November 2021.

2.35 Reading West Station Upgrade – the programme was on track.

2.36 Wokingham: Coppid Beach Park and Ride – update noted.

2.37 Bracknell: A322 A329 Corridor Improvements – update noted.

2.38 Theale Station Park and Ride Upgrade – an agreement had been reached with Thames Water on an outstanding issue and progress was being made.

2.40 Windsor: Town Centre Package – completion was due by December 2021.

2.45 Slough Langley High Street Phase 1 – the scheme was on track.

BRRP Scheme: 2.34 Slough MRT Phase 2 (BRRP) – the scheme promoter stated that some issues had arisen with the original plans for the park and ride

element of the scheme and they were in discussions with the LEP about potential alternative proposals. The LEP would work with SBC and come back to BLTB with a revised business case.

GBF Scheme: Slough Langley High Street Phase 3 – completion had been delayed but was still expected to begin the GBF requirements.

A Member asked for assurance that the recent Section 114 Notice issued by Slough Borough Council not impact on their funding contributions to schemes in the programme. The SBC Officer confirmed that the capital programme had been reviewed and funding for schemes in the programme had been retained. The Section 151 Officer of RBWM (the LEP accountable body) provided assurance that there was regular dialogue between Section 151 Officers with Slough BC to monitor the position.

At the conclusion of the discussion the report was noted.

Resolved – That the progress made on the schemes previously given programme entry status, as set out in the accompanying summary report, be noted.

7. Financial Approval: Scheme 2.37 Bracknell A322/A329 Corridor Improvements: Birch Hill Junction Upgrade

A report was considered that recommended giving financial approval of £450,000 of additional Getting Building Fund (GBF) funding to scheme 2.37 Bracknell: A322 A329 Corridor Improvements for Birch Hill Junction Upgrade.

BLTB had approved the allocation of funding for this part of the scheme in March 2021. The £450,000 had been returned to the funding pot following a reassessment of a previously approved skills project and as GBF projects needed to be fully delivered by 31st March 2022 the funding needed to be allocated quickly to a scheme that could be delivered within the required timescale.

The project would deliver upgrades to signalling equipment at the Birch Hill Junction and the scheme represented a relatively small-scale investment in the replacement of obsolete, and failing, signalling technology at the junction to improve resilience in the strategically important transport corridor. The scheme was an increment to the already approved Local Growth Fund Bracknell project. The additional GBF would take the total funding allocation for the scheme to £850,000. A full business case had been submitted and considered by the LEP's Independent Assessor. The scheme had a BCR of 2.33 representing High value for money and was recommended for full financial approval.

Members considered the report and asked whether the scheme promoter was confident it could be delivered by the end of March 2022 deadline. In response, representatives from Bracknell Forest Council confirmed they were ready to mobilise quickly if approval was given. After due consideration, the recommendation to provide the additional funding was approved.

Resolved – That scheme 2.37 Bracknell: A322/A329 Corridor Improvements be given full financial approval for an additional sum of £450,000 in 2021/22 for the Birch Hill Junction Upgrade on the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 11 step 5 of the report. This brought the total funding for the project to £850,000.

8. Final update on One Year Scheme Evaluations

Members received an update to previous reports given at the November 2020 and March 2021 meetings regarding the One Year Scheme Evaluations that were due.

It was a requirement under section 19 of the agreed BLTB Assurance Framework process that: *“The scheme promoter will publish one- and five-year impact reports post scheme opening. These reports will be reviewed by the independent assessor and reported to the BLTB.”*

The continuing impact of Covid-19 had meant that the gathering appropriate and robust data for scheme assessments and evaluations had proved difficult. However, with the expectation of a continued gradual lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, it was anticipated that the ability for scheme promoters to gather appropriate data for scheme assessments and evaluations would now improve.

In total, six schemes were now due for evaluation:

- Scheme 2.04 – Wokingham: Arborfield Relief Road
- Scheme 2.09.1 - Sustainable Transport NCN 422
- Scheme 2.21 – Slough: Langley Station Access
- Scheme 2.10 - Slough: A322 Improvements
- Scheme 2.11 and 2.12 - Reading: Phase 1 & 2 South Reading MRT*
- Scheme 2.15 - Bracknell: Martin’s Heron roundabout

Department for Transport data indicated that nationally motor vehicles usage for the end of June was at 98% of pre pandemic levels. It was therefore anticipated that the evaluation reports due would be presented to BLTB at the meeting in November 2021.

Resolved – That the update be noted and that reports from the scheme promoters would be produced at the November 2021 BLTB meeting.

9. BLTB Forward Plan

The BLTB Forward Plan which set out the matters to be considered at future meetings was considered an noted.

Resolved – That the BLTB Forward Plan be noted.

10. Date of Next Meeting - 11th November 2021

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as 11th November 2021.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 4.47 pm)

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) and the Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) – investing in strategic infrastructure

This briefing note is intended to set out the way TVB LEP works with BLTB to invest Local Growth Funds in transport schemes.

1. TVB LEP is a business-led organisation responsible for determining the key funding priorities to which Local Growth Funds (LGF) and other public resources are directed in order to implement a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and meet its commitments in the TVB Growth Deals. As a company limited by guarantee (registered at Companies House No. 07885051) it operates according to its Articles of Association, which comply with the Companies Act 2006. As a publicly-funded body it behaves in accordance with an Assurance Framework, which determines the practices and standards necessary to provide assurance to government and local partners that decisions over (all government) funding are proper, transparent and deliver value for money. [**LEP Assurance Framework (AF 4.0) March 2019**]
2. BLTB consists of six elected members (usually the lead member for transport or related portfolio), and six private sector representatives recruited and appointed by the LEP. [**AF 4.0 para 4.2.3**]. It is a Joint Committee of the six unitary authorities in Berkshire and its constitution is set out in its [Founding Document](#).
3. TVB LEP recognises BLTB as “the BLTB has been designated as the competent body to prioritise, invest in and oversee transport capital schemes on behalf of the LEP. DfT retains responsibility for the approval process of schemes in excess of £20m LGF. The LEP will accept any BLTB recommendation or refer them back but will not substitute its own recommendations.” [**AF 4.0, para 5.9**]
4. The process established by government for making Growth Deals is to invite LEPs to submit competitive proposals, and after due consideration to make awards based on all or part of a LEP bid. To date TVB LEP has agreed three Growth Deals. Each of these has included, among other things, the award of capital funds for individual transport schemes that were prioritised in the TVB LEP bid and named in the Growth Deal settlement.
5. TVB LEP works with its partners to identify and prioritise suitable schemes. It is a lobbying organisation, and, via Growth Deals, a joint-funder of selected schemes promoted by (usually, but not always) a local transport authority. [**BLTB Founding Document (FD) 11-13**]
6. BLTB requires promoters to develop each scheme in accordance with current WebTAG guidance published by DfT. In order to receive financial approval from BLTB, the Full Business Case must be subject to independent assessment and a positive recommendation about value for money. [**BLTB FD 14-16**]
7. The scheme promoter is responsible for all aspects of the design, risk management, insurance, procurement, construction and implementation of the scheme, including their responsibilities as highway and planning authorities, any other statutory duties, and any financial or other liabilities arising from the scheme. [**BLTB FD 18**]
8. The time taken between an initial government call for bids and the final announcement of a new Growth Deal can be in excess of a year. TVB LEP (together with BLTB for transport schemes) must go through a number of steps to respond to a government call for bids. Similarly, a transport scheme promoter also must go through several steps:



- LEP receives a call from government or Growth Deal proposals
- LEP asks BLTB to issue a call for transport capital schemes, which meet the Growth Deal criteria
- BLTB consults on and publishes prioritisation methodology for assessing schemes
- Local Transport authorities and other promoters propose schemes for inclusion
- BLTB applies the prioritisation methodology and recommends a priority order of schemes for inclusion in the overall LEP Growth Deal bid
- LEP submits Growth Deal bid including transport schemes
- Government announces Growth Deal approvals (if any) including named schemes and provisional financial allocation
- BLTB awards schemes named in the new Growth Deal “programme entry” status. This reserves the provisional financial allocation for each named scheme until the scheme promoter comes forward with a Full Business Case (FBC), which demonstrates at least “good value for money”
- The scheme promoter works up the detail of the scheme, including planning permission and any other regulatory approvals, design, costs, environmental and other impact assessments. The scheme FBC is then subject to independent scrutiny and a report is made to BLTB

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021**CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB****Item 4: Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal 2015/16 to 2020/21*****Purpose of Report***

1. To report on the progress of the [Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal](#)ⁱ, as amended by Growth Deal 2 ([£10.2 million further support to Thames Valley Berkshire](#)ⁱⁱ) and Growth Deal 3 ([Factsheet GD3](#)ⁱⁱⁱ) with particular reference to the schemes included in the Transport Packages of the [Strategic Economic Plan](#)^{iv}; and on the progress of schemes funded by the Business Rates Retention Pilots (BRRP) of 2018/19 and 2019/20. This report also reports on the transport element of the [Getting Building Fund](#) (GBF) released in September 2020.
2. The headline figure for transport scheme grants under the three Local Growth Deals is £135.926m. This includes £24m of “DfT retained” allocation relating to the Wokingham Distributor Roads. This report provides progress reports on all programme entry schemes and the TVB Smart City Cluster scheme. A further £25m has been released through BRRP1 2018/19 and £11m from BRRP2 2019/20. Thames Valley Berkshire has received £7.5m through the GBF, of which £2,093,000 has been allocated to two transport projects.
3. £14.742m LGF was spent on transport schemes in 2015/16, £16.546m in 2016/17, £15.055m in 2017/18, £8.810m in 2018/19 and £12.441m 2019/20; £44.366m in 2020/21. In addition, £22.947m was spent from BRRP and £0.593 from the GBF.

Recommendations

4. That you note the progress made on the schemes previously given programme entry status, as set out in the accompanying summary report.

Other Implications***Risk Management***

5. The delegation of programme management responsibilities to the LEP/BLTB brings risks. The well-established scrutiny given by both BST(O)F and BLTB meetings is designed to mitigate that risk.
6. There will be an element of risk for scheme promoters who invest in developing their schemes to full business case stage in accordance with the approved [Assurance Framework](#)^v. However, there is also risk involved in not developing the schemes; that risk is that any reluctance to bring the schemes forward will result in any final approval being delayed or refused.
7. The risks associated with each scheme are monitored locally. Table 4 has been adapted to show the current risk rating of each of the schemes. Completed schemes are shown in blue.

Financial

8. Thames Valley Berkshire LEP has been granted freedoms and flexibilities in managing the Local Growth Deal Capital Programme. This means that we will receive an annual allocation of capital within which it will be our responsibility to manage the award of LGF to individual schemes. This is a positive development for TVB LEP and recognises the confidence that government has in our governance arrangements.

Table 1: Available Finance for Transport Schemes (including digital) in TVB Local Growth Deal, BRRP and GBF

£m	2015/16 – 2020/21
LTB previously approved	14.5
Growth Deal 1	56.1
Growth Deal 1 “DfT Major Schemes”	24.0
Growth Deal 2	7.5
Growth Deal 3	*35.2
Local Growth Deal Total	137.3
BRRP 2018/19 and 2019/20	36.0
Getting Building Fund 2020/21 and 2021/22	2.1
Grand Total	177.2

*Includes funding for Thames Valley Smart City Cluster project, to allow all digital infrastructure funds to be show above

9. The profile and status of the available money in each year is as follows:

Table 2: Local Growth Deal, BRRP and GBF Financial Allocations for Transport Schemes by Financial Year

£m	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Combined Growth Deal 1, 2, 3 and LTB Allocation approved	14.74	16.55	15.06	8.81	12.44	44.37	-	111.96
Growth Deal funding for Smart City Cluster	-	-	0.08	0.25	0.80	0.30	-	1.44
Growth Deal 1 (DfT Major Schemes) <i>indicative</i>	-	-	-	0.87	22.13	1.0	-	24.0
Local Growth Deal Total	14.74	16.55	15.14	9.93	35.37	45.67	-	137.40
BRRP	-	-	-	11.5	10.0	14.5	-	36.0
Getting Building Fund	-	-	-	-	-	2.30	1.50	3.80
Grand Total	14.74	16.55	15.14	21.43	45.37	62.47	1.50	177.20

10. The breakdown of types of projects with allocated LGF, BRRP and GBF monies is shown below:

Table 3: Breakdown of schemes by type by funding allocated

£m	LGF	BRRP	GBF	Total
MRT / P&R projects	23.5	21.1	-	44.6
Railway projects	30.7	-	-	30.7
Highway improvements	24.6	-	2.1	26.7
Unlocking direct housing	21.6	12.3	-	33.9
Regeneration	4.5			4.5
Active travel	6.9			6.9
Revenue projects	0.004	1.5	-	1.5
Digital	1.4	1.1	1.7	4.3
DfT retained	24.0	-	-	24.0
Unallocated funds	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total funding	137.4	36.0	3.8	177.2

11. The LGF programme closed on 31 March 2021. Where a project did not complete by this date and there was still outstanding expenditure, the LEP was allowed to use freedoms and flexibilities to temporarily allocate the funding to an alternative capital project that took place within the local authority during 2020/21. Once the original projects completes, the LGF will be reallocated back to the original project. This process is known as a capital swap and is an accounting process to ensure that capital grants are defrayed within the correct financial period. Delivery partners confirmed that by the end of March 2021, expenditure was at roughly £79m, against the £112m paid over the LGF period. Roughly £33m was reallocated as a capital swap. The following table shows the amount of capital swap that was required by each local authority:

Table 4: LGF Capital Swap by Local Authority

Local Authority	Amount
West Berkshire Council	£10.8m
Slough Borough Council	£7m
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£6.2m
Wokingham Borough Council	£5.2m
Reading Borough Council	£3m
Bracknell Forest Council	£1m
Total	£33.2m

12. Table 5 has been amended to present all project data previously shown across several tables. It shows the final award of scheme finance for 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21. The provisional allocation for 2021/22 is shown for the BRRP and GBF. It also shows Red Amber Green (RAG) risk rating and completed projects in blue, the data that LTB approval was granted or sought and any notes including when future evaluations are due

13. *Table 5 – Local Growth Deal, BRRP and GBF Scheme Funding Profiles*

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
LOCAL GROWTH FUND														
2.01	Newbury: King's Road Link Road	GD1	AG	Outstanding planning issue to be resolved prior to completion	Mar-15	Oct-16	Due Dec 21	0.000	1.335	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.335
2.02	Bracknell: Warfield Link Road	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Mar 20	Jan-15	Feb-15	Apr 17; open Oct 18	3.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.500
Page 12 2.03	Newbury: London Road Industrial Estate	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 18 Delays to linked housing	Mar-15	Feb-16	Mar-17	0.500	1.400	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.900
2.04	Wokingham Arborfield Relief Rd	DfT major	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 22	Jul & Aug 19 via DfT	Aug 19 enabling	Nov-20	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.874	22.126	1.000	24.000
2.05	Newbury: Sandleford Park	GD2	G	Final works underway	Jul-16	Aug-18	Due Dec 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
2.06	Reading Green Park Railway Station	GD1	A	Further funding gap identified due to changes to NR safety requirements. Awaiting confirmation of additional DfT funds	Nov 14 & Jul 19	Mar-18	Due Jan 22	0.000	0.000	4.575	0.000	4.575	0.550	9.700

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.07	Bracknell: Coral Reef Roundabout	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Nov 17	Jan-15	Apr-15	Apr-16	2.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.100
2.08	Slough Rapid Transit Phase 1	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Mar 20	Jul-14	Dec-15	Dec 17; buses Mar 19	3.100	2.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.600
2.09.01	Sustainable Transport: NCN 422	GD1	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 22	Nov-15	Jan-17	Dec-20	0.000	2.100	1.500	0.200	0.400	0.000	4.200
2.09.02	Sustainable Transport: A4 Cycle (with Bucks)	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 20	Nov-15	Feb-17	Sep-18	0.000	0.483	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.483
2.10	Slough A332 Improvements	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Nov 21	Nov-14	Dec-15	Sep-19	1.267	1.433	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.700
2.11	South Reading Mass Rapid Transit Phase 1	GD1	C	1-yr impact report published Nov 21	Nov-15	Aug-16	Jul-19	0.000	2.970	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.970
2.12	South Reading Mass Rapid Transit Phase 2							0.000	0.000	1.530	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.530
2.13	Wokingham Thames Valley Park and Ride	GD1	C	Bus service tender is on hold	Jul-17	Feb-18	Nov-20	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000	0.900	0.000	2.900
2.14	East Reading MRT Phase 1	GD1	Project withdrawn											
2.25	East Reading MRT Phase 2	GD3												
2.15	Bracknell: Martins Heron	GD1	C	1-yr impact report	Apr-17	Apr-17	Apr-19	0.000	0.200	2.700	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.900

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
				published Nov 21										
2.16	Maidenhead: Station Access	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report due Nov 22	Nov-17	Jan-19	Oct-21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.690	1.666	1.394	3.750
2.17	Slough: A355 route	GD 1	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 18	Nov-14	Dec-15	Feb-17	2.275	2.125	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.400
2.18	Not used													
2.19	Bracknell: Town Centre Regeneration Infrastructure	GD 2	C	1-yr impact report published Mar 19	Nov-15	Apr-15	Sep-17	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
2.20	Not used													
2.21	Slough: Langley Station Access	GD 2	C	1-yr impact report published Nov 21	Nov-16	Mar-18	Feb-20	0.000	0.000	1.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.500
2.22	Slough: Burnham Station Access	GD 2	C	1-yr impact report published Jul 20	Mar-16	Jan-17	Apr-19	0.000	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
2.23	Reading: South Reading MRT Ph 3-4	GD 3	G	Final works underway. See BRRP below.	Nov-17	Mar-18	Due Nov 21	0.000	0.000	2.250	0.090	0.000	0.000	2.340
2.24	Newbury: Railway Station	GD 3	A	Risks remain due to complexity and size of project.	Conditional Jul 18, lifted Feb 19	Jan-19	Due Aug 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.630	0.000	3.061	6.691

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.25	East Reading MRT Phase 2 - See 2.14 above													
2.26	Wokingham: Winnersh Relief Road Phase 2 - See BRRP below													
2.27	Maidenhead Town Centre: Missing Links	GD 3	AG	Additional work to bridge from ground investigations are delaying completion.	Conditional Nov 18, lifted Sep 19	Nov-20	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.242	2.242
2.28	Bracknell: A3095 Corridor	GD 3	C	1-yr impact report due Jul 22	Jul-18	Oct 18 enabling	Jun-21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.200	1.800	3.519	5.519
Page 15 2.29	Wokingham: Winnersh Triangle Park & Ride	GD 3 resrv.	A	Discovery of a water main running along proposed foundations for carpark causing delay. Awaiting revised programme of works.	Conditional Mar 19, lifted May 19	Apr-21	Due Jun 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.240	4.240
2.30	TVB Smart City Cluster – See below													
2.31	Slough: Stoke Road Area Regeneration	GD 3 resrv.	AG	Risk to deadline due to rail project complexity.	Jul-19	Aug 19 enabling	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000	6.650	7.650
2.32	Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Work Ph. 1	GD 3 resrv.	G	Work underway. See BRRP below	Conditional Jan 19, lifted Jul 20	Nov-20	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.254	4.254

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.33	GWR: Maidenhead to Marlow Branch Line Upgrade	GD 3 resrv.	Project withdrawn											
2.34	Slough MRT Phase 2 – see BRRP below													
2.35	Reading: Reading West Station Upgrade	GD 3 resrv.	A	Risks as GWR works are yet to start but no indication of issues.	Nov-19	Feb-21	Due Nov 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.100	3.100
2.36	Wokingham: Coppid Beech Park and Ride	GD 3 resrv.	G	Work underway	Mar-20	Feb-21	Due Dec 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.400	2.400
2.37	Bracknell: A322 A329 Corridor Improvements	GD 3 resrv.	G	Work underway	Nov-19, amendment Jun 20	Nov-20	Due Dec 21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.400	0.400
2.38	Theale Station Upgrade	GD 3 resrv.	A	Risks due to complexity of railway project.	Conditional June 20, lifted Dec 20	Mar-21	Due Oct 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.000	4.000
2.39	Wokingham: Coppid Beech northbound on-slip widening	GD 3 resrv.	Project withdrawn											
2.40	Windsor: Town Centre Package	GD 3 resrv.	AR	Main contractor re-tender underway due to increased costs.	Jul-20	Mar-21	Due Jul 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.563	1.563
2.41	Not used													
2.42	South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway – see BRRP below													

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.43	Wokingham: Barkham Bridge	GD 3 resrv.	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 22	Nov-19	Nov-19	Feb-21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.100	2.136	4.236
2.44	Reading Buses: Completing the Connection	GD 3 resrv.	C	1-yr impact report due Mar 22	Conditional July 20 lifted Nov 20	Nov-20	Mar-21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.541	1.541
2.45	Slough Langley High Street phase 1	GD 3 resrv.	AG	Unexpected utility discoveries pushing completion to March 22.	Conditional June 20 lifted Oct 20	Feb-21	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.324	1.324
Page 17 2.46	Slough Langley High Street phase 2	GD 3 resrv.	AG	Unexpected utility discoveries pushing completion to March 22.	Conditional Jul 20 lifted Oct 20	Feb-21	Due Mar 22	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.033	1.033
2.47	Bracknell Town Centre The Deck	GD 3 resrv.	C	1-yr impact report due Nov 22	Conditional Nov 20, lifted Dec 20	Feb-21	Aug-21	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.956	0.956
N/a	Independent assessment costs	GD 3 resrv.	N/a					0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.004
					Total LGF Spend			14.742	16.546	15.055	9.684	34.567	45.367	135.961
					Unallocated LGF									0.000
2.30	TVB Smart City Cluster	LGF	G	Final works underway. See BRRP below.	Nov 17 by LEP Board	Jan-18	Due Dec 21	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.255	0.802	0.300	1.440

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
BUSINESS RATES RETENTION PILOT														
Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
Capital Projects														
2.23	Reading: South Reading MRT Ph 3-4	BRRP	G	Final works underway. See BRRP below.	Nov-17	Mar-18	Due Nov 21			7.808	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.808
2.26	Wokingham: Winnersh Relief Road Phase 2	BRRP	C	Ph 1 privately funded. Moved from LGF. 1-yr impact report due Jul 22	Conditional Nov 18, lifted Feb 19	Jan-19	May-21			3.000	3.260	0.000	0.000	6.260
2.32	Maidenhead: Housing Sites Enabling Work Ph. 1	BRRP	G	See LGF above	Conditional Jan 19, lifted Jul 20	Nov-20	Due Mar 22			0.000	0.000	0.000	1.027	1.027
2.34	Slough MRT Phase 2	BRRP	AR	Project split in 2: MRT to complete Oct 21; P&R Dec 22 with increased scope (EV & hydrogen hub)	Jan-19	Aug-19	Due Dec 22			0.000	1.000	3.000	9.300	13.300
2.42	South Wokingham Distributor Road – Eastern Gateway	BRRP	G	Work underway	Nov-19	Oct-19	Due Mar 22			0.000	5.000	0.000	0.000	5.000

Ref.	Scheme Name	Growth Deal	RAG	Notes	LTB Funding Approval	Start on Site	Completion date	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
2.30	TVB Smart City Cluster	BRRP	G	Additional BRRP awarded	Mar-20	Jan-18	Due Dec 21			0.000	0.293	0.284	0.000	0.577
4.0	Superfast Berkshire	BRRP	G	Moved from LGF (digital)	Mar-20	Jul-15	Due Mar 22			0.000	0.436	0.111	0.000	0.547
Total BRRP Spend - Capital										10.808	9.989	3.395	10.327	34.519
Revenue Projects														
N/a	BLIS development	BRRP	N/a	Work completed						0.044	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.090
N/a	Business Case Preparation	BRRP	N/a	6 proposals approved						0.600	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.600
Page 19	N/a	Forward Plans Team	BRRP	N/a	Proposals being developed	Mar-20	Oct-20	Mar-21			0.000	0.000	0.065	0.685
	N/a	Independent assessment of 1 & 5 year evaluations	BRRP	N/a	Transferred from LGF by adjusting LGF / BRRP proportions for project 2.32	Due Jul 21	Due Nov 21	Due Mar 27			0.000	0.000	0.000	0.041
Total BRRP Spend - Revenue										0.644	0.046	0.065	0.726	1.481
Total BRRP Spend										11.452	10.035	3.460	11.053	36.000
Unallocated BRRP														0.000
GETTING BUILDING FUND												2020/21	2021/22	Total
GBF1	Slough Langley High Street phase 3	GBF	A	Awaiting start on site	Cond. Nov 20; lifted May 21	Due Oct 21	Due Mar 22					0.593	1.050	1.643
GBF15	Bracknell A322 A329 Corridor Improvements	GBF	A	Awaiting start on site	Jul-21	Due Jan 22	Due Mar 22					0.000	0.450	0.450
Total GBF Spend												0.593	1.500	2.093

14. Included in the information above is detail relating to 2.30 TVB Smart City Cluster. The project delivers three key deliverables:
- a. Smart city platform: consisting of an Internet of Things (IoT) or Lora Wan communication platform across all six Berkshire Local Authorities and a cross-authority open data platform. This is enabling infrastructure for the delivery of a wide range of IoT technologies including traffic signal communications which will provide the revenue savings to maintain and operate the system.
 - b. Challenge funded IoT solutions: grant funded IoT solutions to real Local Authority challenges which the private sector has responded to. These grants were awarded through competition and on the basis of co-funding.
 - c. Cross authority / cross sector smart city group: This includes a Steering Group to oversee the project delivery and act as a catalyst for wider smart city debate, project development and funding.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

15. The [Assurance Framework](#)^{vi} referred to above identifies the steps that scheme promoters should take in order to secure financial approval from the LTB. There are, in effect, two layers of scheme approval. The first, and primary layer rests with the scheme promoter (all the schemes referred to in this report are being promoted by Local Authorities). In order to implement the schemes in question, each promoter will need to satisfy themselves that all the legal implications have been considered and appropriately resolved. The secondary layer of approval, given by the LTB, is concerned with the release of funds against the detailed business case. The arrangements for publication of plans via the LEP and promoters' websites, the arrangements for independent assessment and the consideration of detailed scheme reports are appropriate steps to ensure that any significant Human Rights Act or other legal implications are properly identified and considered.

Supporting Information

16. The Thames Valley Berkshire LEP website has published summary information about all its Growth Deal-funded projects, including all transport projects. Please go to Thames Valley Berkshire [Local Growth Fund](#)^{vii} and [Business Rates Retention Pilot](#)^{viii} e-Books.
17. There is a detailed progress report on each of the schemes in the accompanying composite report.

Monitoring and Evaluation

18. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Deal has now been agreed with government. In addition to the need for transport scheme promoters to collect and publish monitoring and evaluation reports that comply with DfT guidance for capital schemes, there will be requirements to cooperate with the overall monitoring and evaluation plan for the Growth Deal.

19. The difference between the two processes is that one concentrates on the transport impacts and the other on the economic impacts. The basic information required from each scheme promoter is set out in the scheme proformas. This requirement is less onerous for schemes under £5m Growth Deal contribution and runs to much more detail for the larger schemes.
20. For most schemes there will be little or no additional Growth Deal monitoring burden beyond that already signalled. Extra effort may be required to comply with the standard set out in the Monitoring and Evaluation plan which is “accurate, timely, verified and quality assured monitoring data”. For schemes mentioned by name in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (see list below) there will be a separate discussion about the duties on the scheme promoter:
- 2.01 Newbury: King’s Road Link Road
 - 2.04 Wokingham: Distributor Roads Programme
 - 2.06 Reading: Green Park Railway Station
 - 2.08 Slough: Rapid Transit Phase 1

Background Papers

Each of the schemes referred to above has a proforma summarising its details. Both the LEP and LTB prioritisation processes and scoring schemes are also available background papers. The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for TVB Growth Deal is also available.

ⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/327587/35_Thames_Valley_Berkshire_Growth_Deal.pdf

ⁱⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/399438/Thames_Valley_Berkshire_Factsheet.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱhttps://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/589268/170202_Thames_Valley_Berkshire_LEP_GD_factsheet.pdf

^{iv} <http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/documents?page=1&folder=192&view=files>

^v<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/berkshire-strategic-transport-forum>

^{vi}<http://www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/berkshire-strategic-transport-forum>

^{vii} <https://spark.adobe.com/page/IUllI858NStY0/>

^{viii} <https://spark.adobe.com/page/6LOjEtuDgacVm/>

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021

CONTACT OFFICER: TIM WHEADON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

Item 5: 2.10 Slough: A332 Windsor Road Improvements – One Year Evaluation Report

Purpose of Report

1. At your meeting in March 2017, you approved guidance for the preparation of one- and five-year-on impact reports for BLTB funded local transport schemes.
2. Per reports received at the March and July 2021 BLTB meetings, it was agreed that due to the Covid pandemic, the pending one-year impact reports would be temporarily suspended until a sufficient resumption of normal, or near normal, traffic movements resumed. It has been agreed by the Berkshire Transport Officers that we are probably now at this point, enabling reports to be drawn up and submitted.
3. This report introduces the one-year impact report for scheme 2.10 Slough: A332 Windsor Road improvements scheme.

Recommendation

4. You are recommended to note the reports from the scheme promoter and the independent assessor.

Other Implications

Financial

5. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Risk Management

6. The government requires all LEPs to have Assurance Frameworks which set out governance arrangements and financial procedures. One of the specific requirements for transport schemes is to require scheme promoters to submit impact reports one- and five-years post implementation.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

7. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of the Assurance Framework.

Supporting Information

8. Slough Borough Council received £2.7m in LGF towards the cost of this £5.0m scheme.
9. The one-year on impact report is attached at Appendix 1; and the independent assessor's report is attached at Appendix 2.

Conclusion

10. The Independent Assessor concludes that the SBC one-year impact report is a well-constructed and balanced document, making good use of the available evidence at this stage. Whilst the agreed delay in producing this report was agreed with TVB LEP and Berkshire Local Transport Body some initial data has been provided to show the impacts of the scheme before COVID.
11. The report also provides very helpful photographs of after scheme completion which brings to life the changes which have been implemented because of TVB LEP and SBC investment. While the report helpfully outlines how the scheme has addressed congestion, safety concerns and reliability in Slough along the network. The scheme did also face a number of challenges including the completion date being approximately 2 years later than expected with a small cost overrun of £150k met by the council.
12. It would be useful helpful to see an overarching conclusion section which draws upon all elements of the scheme and makes final remarks about the success of the scheme.
13. Undertaking of a one-year impact report is too soon to provide a realistic assessment of the actual outcomes of the scheme. The Council expects to be able to provide a much more detailed review of the scheme at the five-year evaluation report milestone.
14. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:
 - While the report provides a positive indication of the scheme reducing congestion and safety and provides some initial data, providing more detailed analysis for the five-year report will be important to evaluate the impact and outcomes of the scheme. Data from surveys about the operation of the scheme, local air quality levels, accident data, ATC survey counts to measure traffic flows.
 - The report includes a section about growth forecast relating to commercial and housing units coming forward relating to this scheme and wider schemes coming forward. SBC should closely monitor what was predicted for jobs, floorspace, housing etc against which of these benefits arise.
 - For future monitoring reports, providing clarity on the different stages and milestones of the scheme and what happened during construction. The report should state for each milestone what was the estimated date of completion and the actual date of completion.
 - For future monitoring reports, provide a breakdown of costs to show that the estimated costs in the business case against those actually incurred.
 - For future monitoring reports, the report should include key maps and locations of the scheme interventions and, where possible, visual evidence to help contextualise the pre-scheme investment position and the post-investment position.
15. There is no further action required.

Background Papers: None.

Slough: A332 Windsor Road Improvements

Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB)

One Year On Evaluation report

Bill Hicks

October 2021



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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

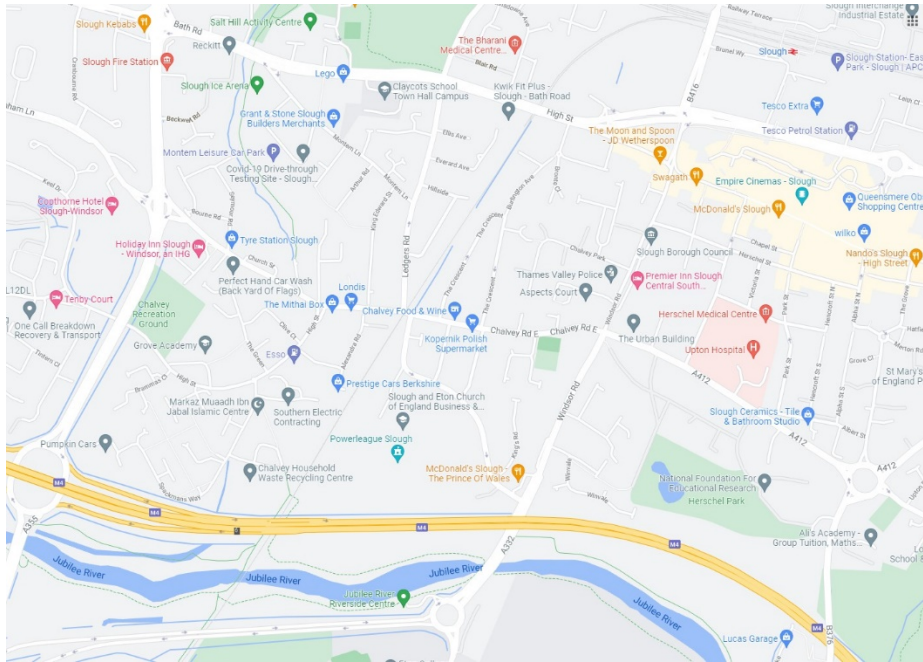
Slough Borough Council received £2,700,000 from the Local Growth Fund towards the improvements and redesign of the A332 / Windsor Road. Additional funding was provided by Slough Borough Council via S106 agreements and capital funds, making an overall total of £5,000,000 for the delivery of the scheme.

The Windsor Road Improvements scheme included a programme of junction improvements, road widening and related works on the A332 / Windsor Road, with the aim of improving conditions for general traffic as well as buses along this strategic route, making journeys quicker and more reliable. Hence, the scheme represented a major urban renewal project at this prominent entrance point to the town centre, with a substantial redesign of the road layout, signals configurations, and crossing points along the route.

This report evaluates the success of the project, taking into account improvements to the road network, road safety, and the opportunities for economic growth.

1.2. Location

The A332 is one of the main strategic routes in the borough, being a continuation of the A332 flyover from Royal Windsor Way and the subsequent spur road to the roundabout at the Jubilee River, just below the boundary between Slough and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. At this point the road becomes Windsor Road. The main structural changes included in this scheme are contained within the section from the junction with Ragstone Road up to the junction with Slough High Street. This includes prominent junctions with Chalvey Road East / A412 Albert Street and with Herschel Street. For traffic review purposes, the full extent considered runs from Jubilee River to the Heart of Slough.



Map of central Slough including the approach east/northbound via the Eton spur road to Windsor Road.

1.3. Historic Problems

1.3.1. Congestion

This route is subject to heavy traffic flow, as it carries a large amount of commuters as well as local traffic accessing businesses, schools, shops and other destinations. Tens of thousands of commuters enter and exit Slough on a daily basis, Monday to Friday. As a result, congestion arises and journey times can be unpredictable.

1.3.2. Road Safety

Previously, crossing facilities for pedestrians were inadequate at the junction with the A412/Albert Street, with no dedicated pedestrian phase. Although not an ‘accident hotspot’, one of the objectives of the scheme was to reduce the average annual number of incidents in Windsor Road.

1.3.3. Maintenance

Due to the high volume of usage, highways maintenance, including street lighting repairs, has previously been expensive and difficult to arrange and carry out safely.

1.4. Scheme Objectives

The A332 Route Enhancement scheme was designed to improve traffic flow on the strategic north-south A332 route that connects runs from this southern entrance to the borough to the Town Centre. From a traffic perspective, the key requirements were to reduce road congestion and to improve road safety as well as to increase network reliability. This goes hand in hand with economic growth, and extensive residential and commercial development opportunities were expected to be forthcoming following the completion of the scheme.

As stated in the final business case, section 3.26, the main objectives of the scheme were as follows:

1. To relieve localised congestion and enhance accessibility to the southern gateway to Slough Town Centre
2. Provide a direct high quality, safe, convenient and reliable travel to Slough Town Centre and improve public perception of transport in Slough
3. Support economic development in Slough town centre and contribute to tackling deprivation
4. Mitigate future impact of noise and air pollution and greenhouse gases on the A332 route

In terms of evaluation, the business case set out in section 3.29 the intention to focus specifically on:

- Traffic congestion and journey times; and
- Road safety

1.5. Timetable for this review

This is the formal, one-year-on evaluation review. The scheme was completed in September 2019, however, due to the impacts of COVID-19, notably on traffic levels across the network, it was agreed with the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and the Berkshire Local Transport Body that this review would be delayed until all the COVID restrictions had been lifted.

2. Funding

2.1. Funding details

The majority of the funding for this scheme came from the LEP Local Growth Deal. Additional funding was provided by the Council from S106 contributions and capital funds. The full figures are shown in the tables below:

Source of funding	Total
LEP Local Growth Deal	£2,700,000
<i>Local contributions:</i>	
- Section 106 agreements	£250,000
- Council Capital funds	£2,050,000
Total Scheme Cost	£5,000,000

3. Scheme details

The scheme included a series of junction improvements including enhanced crossing points. Widening of the carriageway was undertaken in the section on the eastern side of the road, to the south of the junction of the A332 with the A412 / Albert Street.

3.1. Specific design elements

- Re-designed road layout and lane configuration, with particular focus on the junction with Chalvey Road East/A412.
- Re-designed key junctions along the route, most prominently the junctions with Chalvey Road East/A412, Herschel Street, Vale Grove and Ragstone Road.
- New traffic islands along the route, enhancing crossing points.
- New pedestrian phase in the signalised crossing at the junction with Chalvey Road East/A412/Albert Street.
- Widening of the carriageway between the junction with the A412/Albert Street and the junction with Ragstone Road.
- Extended and enhanced traffic island approaching the junction with Ragstone Road.
- Full resurfacing with new lane markings
- Drainage improvement

3.2. Supporting measures

3.2.1. Traffic Management

Given the high volume, strategic nature of the route, extensive traffic management plans were devised. This included a temporary roundabout in place in the first phase of construction at the normally signalised junction with Chalvey Road East and the A412/Albert Street.

3.2.2. Communications

The project was supported by an extensive communications programme to keep residents and motorists advised of upcoming works and disruptions. This was particularly important at times when closures were in place for road surfacing, when diversions were in operation.

The communications took the form of public consultations, letter drops, press releases, the SBC website, and information sharing with neighbouring authorities the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Highways England. Overall, there was widespread patience and acceptance of the disruption in expectation of the network and wider benefits that would arise from the new road layout.

3.3. Key dates

Construction started on site in January 2016. The work was completed in September 2019. See section 4 for more information including reasons for the length of the scheme delivery.

4. Progress and Monitoring

4.1. SBC / Balfour Beatty partnership

Monthly meetings were held with the project manager, main contractor (initially Balfour Beatty) and their traffic management subcontractors. Regular contract monitoring and scheme progress reports were provided by Balfour Beatty and discussed with the Head of Transport at the Council. SBC engineers regularly attended the works site along with fellow project team members in order to monitor progress and to check adherence to technical plans and specifications.

4.2. Construction and programming problems

The programme was completed successfully with a high quality scheme delivered. However, during the construction period, several major problems were experienced on site, calling for persistence and thoroughness, as well as technical expertise and sound judgement in devising appropriate solutions. Nevertheless, the programme overran significantly.

This main reason was the presence of utility services, specifically gas pipes, in unexpected locations, despite trial holes having previously been carried out in preparation of the main construction work. The subsequent delays in responses and lead times from the utility company in question, due in part to the high profile location on the network, but also due to the complexity of the re-designs, were extensive.

Added to the utility service diversion requirements, Balfour Beatty were replaced as the main contractors in 2017, with the scheme unfinished. This did not reflect on the quality of their work, or their ability to continue from a technical perspective, but rather from a value for money perspective, and the need to ensure the costs did not escalate unacceptably as a result of the delays. The Council took the decision to transfer responsibility for the remainder of the construction programme to the recently created in-house Direct Service Organisation (DSO). Hence, there were additional delays during the transition period between the contractors.

One final aspect here which was to some extent a knock on effect of the programme delays was the completion of the signalling works at some of the junctions. Various aspects of the signalling work were rescheduled on more than one occasion to tie in with the utility diversions.

Ultimately, following a series of programme revisions, the project was completed on site in September 2019, having originally been expected to finish in 2017.

4.3. Health and Safety

As set out in the monthly reports received by SBC, an excellent health and safety record was maintained for the duration of the project. Balfour Beatty strive to maintain zero harm, and this was backed up by minimal incidents and quick responses, with thorough investigation into any problems that arose, and a culture of transparency. Slough's DSO also has the same high standards and an excellent safety record. There were no serious incidents on site during the project.

4.4. Road Safety Audits

Road Safety audits were carried out at each stage of the project. The reports indicated:

- No departures from standard reported by the Design Organisation.
- All issues raised at stage 2 (design) were resolved.
- Following RSA stage 3, the site was considered to be fully compliant with road safety guidelines.

5. Review of the outcomes against objectives:

5.1. Overall outcome

With reference to the specific objectives in the original business case:

The overall image of this route, forming the southern gateway into the Town Centre, has been drastically improved. The highway widening and junction improvements have led to a more attractive road layout out. The aesthetic appeal of the route has also been radically enhanced by the complementary development work, which has included the demolition of buildings which were old, distressed and quite an eyesore, and the construction of attractive, high quality buildings in their place. The combined highway and land development measures have positively transformed Windsor Road, bringing impressive visual and functional improvements.

The highway improvements, incorporating carriageway, footway, junction and signalling enhancements, have led to a safer, more convenient and more reliable thoroughfare for all road users. Significant traffic improvements have been achieved. See section 5.3.

Road safety has also improved. See section 5.5 for details.

The public perception of transport in Slough as a result of this scheme has not been thoroughly captured, but a positive response is anticipated. Further engagement with the public will be necessary to provide a more informed view on this aspect.

The redevelopment of Windsor Road represents a substantial contribution to the overall economic development in the town centre and surrounding environ, in both highway and development realms. The reduction in deprivation levels specifically has not yet been fully reviewed.

Regarding the expected improvements in noise reduction and greenhouse gases on the A332 route, this still requires extensive investigation. No results or conclusions have been reached yet. This is due, in part, to assessing the changing traffic patterns in response to the COVID 19 situation, and to what can be considered to be the ongoing 'normal' in this respect.

5.2. Photographs of the new road layout and re-designed junctions



Image 1: A332/Windsor Road looking north towards the town centre.
Taken shortly after completion in 2019



Image 2: Crossing to the north of the junction of Windsor Road and the A412. New crossing facility and signals enhancement. Taken September 2021



Image 3: Windsor Road looking south at the junction with Herschel Street.
Taken September 2021



Image 4: Redesigned footway adjacent to Windsor Road at the junction with Vale Grove, looking south towards the borough boundary. Taken mid-scheme 2017

5.3. Traffic network outcomes - overview

The key objective was to reduce congestion by improving traffic flow and thereby to reduce journey times and to improve journey time reliability, on Windsor Road (the specific location of the scheme in question), with a wider contribution to such benefits expected on the connected strategic routes across the borough. The Council has therefore assessed the traffic data available from the Bluetooth detectors linked to the Drakewell database.

The new road infrastructure and layout have improved network resilience and performance, overall. However, the extent of these improvements is yet to be fully established over a consistent period, due mainly to the abnormal traffic conditions from March 2020 (the onset of restricting in response to the COVID-19 situation) until late summer in 2021 (the end of

formal restrictions imposed previously by the Government). Even now, at the time of writing this report in October 2021, it is widely understood that commuter patterns have still not yet returned to normal (i.e. post COVID lockdown levels), due to many people continuing to work at home.

When modelling the scheme, the expected outcome was an improvement in traffic flow, with particular improvements expected in the northbound direction on the A332 during morning peak hours and southbound in the evening peak hours. The objective was to reduce congestion largely caused by commuter traffic and bottlenecks on this heavily used north/south link. The northbound route commences at the borough boundary, at the Jubilee River, and continues up to the Heart of Slough junction.

The most useful measure by which to judge the impacts appears to be average journey time for peak hours on weekdays, Monday to Friday. This measures the time taken to travel, in both directions, between the Bluetooth detector on the A332/Windsor Road and the detector at the Heart of Slough.

In order to assess traffic congestion levels across the wider network, some analysis of the data for the A4/Bath Road and the A355/Tuns Lane has also been undertaken, within the extended route. Nb the A332/ Windsor Road runs tangential to the A4. The full route considered runs between the borough boundaries, from the Jubilee River to the M4 junction 6 roundabout, on the basis that all of the connected roads, all delivered via the Local Growth Fund, are interlinked and produce a combined effect across the network.

5.4. Traffic data review

Traffic data for the A332 / Windsor Road scheme has been collected and reviewed for all time periods available and considered appropriate for comparison or comment. The most appropriate figures for this purpose are considered to be average journey time and average speed.

The following overall points should be noted:

- Data has been obtained from the Drakewell traffic data system.
- Collected via Bluetooth detection.
- Detectors were installed in September 2015. This was shortly before the construction phase of the project started. Hence limited data is available pre scheme. ATC detectors

were also installed in most locations. Data from both detection methods has previously been compared and found to be consistent.

- Data has been collected for the entire period since October 2015 (the ‘before’ period) to September 2021 (with the ‘after’ period commencing in September 2019). However, only data for comparable ranges of months has been presented in tabular form.
- The most relevant comparison is considered to be between the period from October to December 2015 (pre-construction) and October to December 2019 (post-completion, pre-COVID19)
- The figures reflect a wide range of network circumstances. Most notably, over the last two years, traffic levels have been distorted significantly during the various lockdown periods due to the impacts of COVID-19, and by only a partial ‘return’ to normal since all restrictions were lifted.
- The data for 2016 to 2018 has been shown in italics, since this represents the main part of the construction period. The state of the carriageway varied during the construction programme. Notable factors included the installation of a temporary roundabout at the junction with Chalvey Road East and the A412, and also the reduction in active lanes for an extended period.
- Hence, all data is subject to caveats, and longer term analysis of traffic patterns and statistics will be essential to demonstrate the full impacts of the A332/Windsor scheme, as well as the related / linked highway improvements in Slough.

**Table 1 Northbound entering Slough
Windsor Road from the Jubilee River roundabout to the Heart of Slough**

AM Peak: 07:00 to 10:00 hrs PM Peak: 15:00 to 19:00 hrs Length: **0.9 miles**

	AM peak	AM peak	PM peak	PM peak	
Period	Jny time (mins)	Ave speed (mph)	Jny time (mins)	Ave speed (mph)	Scheme / Network status
Oct – Dec 2015	4:31	11.8	5:16	10.13	Pre-construction
<i>2016</i>	<i>5:02</i>	<i>10.1</i>	<i>5:05</i>	<i>10.5</i>	<i>Mid-scheme</i>
<i>2017</i>	<i>4:28</i>	<i>11.9</i>	<i>5:04</i>	<i>10.5</i>	<i>Mid-scheme</i>
<i>2018</i>	<i>4:45</i>	<i>11.3</i>	<i>5:10</i>	<i>10.3</i>	<i>Mid-scheme</i>
Oct – Dec 2019	4:23	12.2	4:38	11.5	Post-construction
Oct – Dec 2020	3:47	14.0	4:19	12.3	COVID - Full lockdown
Aug – Sept 2021	4:10	12.9	5:00	10.7	No COVID restrictions

Comment

From the figures shown in red, relating to the periods immediately before and after the construction period, for the AM peak period, there has been a reduction in average journey time of eight seconds, with a corresponding increase in average speed of 1.1mph. The improvement in the PM period is greater, with a reduction of 38 seconds, and a corresponding increase in average speed of 1.4mph.

The period with the greatest variation in figures is, not surprisingly, the autumn of 2020, when extensive travel restrictions were in place on both a local and national basis, with many people who would normally commute working from home. There has been a relatively short period since all restrictions were lifted, and figures are provided, but a clear picture of the overall network activity and working habits is yet to be established.

Table 2 **Southbound exiting Slough**
Heart of Slough to the Jubilee River roundabout via Windsor Road

AM Peak: 07:00 to 10:00 hrs PM Peak: 15:00 to 19:00 hrs Length: **0.7 miles**

	AM peak	AM peak	PM peak	PM peak	
Period	Jny time (mins)	Ave speed (mph)	Jny time (mins)	Ave speed (mph)	Scheme / Network status
Oct – Dec 2015	3:05	14.40	3:32	12.57	Pre-construction
2016	3:30	12.77	3:56	11.40	Mid-scheme
2017	2:57	15.17	3:43	12.27	Mid-scheme
2018	3:10	14.07	3:28	12.83	Mid-scheme
Oct – Dec 2019	3:01	14.17	3:05	14.43	Post-construction
Oct – Dec 2020	2:49	15.83	2:54	15.27	COVID - Full lockdown
Aug – Sept 2021	3:07	14.30	3:28	12.80	No COVID restrictions

Comment

As for the northbound traffic data, pre and post scheme construction periods (the figures shown in red), a relatively small reduction has been demonstrated in average journey times, with increases in average speeds, during the AM peak hours. Again, for the PM hours, a greater reduction in average journey time and related increase in average speed have been recorded. The comments related to the impacts of COVID-19 (and indeed the notes on the various changing scenarios on the network) apply here for the southbound figures too.

Nb the distance for the route in this direction (0.7miles) is less than for northbound travel (0.9 miles), due to the configuration of the Heart of Slough junction. Northbound traffic is required to make a minor detour at the junction, whereas southbound traffic is permitted to travel directly through the junction.

Wider network impacts

Further data collection and analysis is ongoing. This includes consideration of the collective impact of the various major highway improve projects that have taken place over the period under review. The overall expectation is that widespread benefits derived from all three major schemes (A332/Windsor Road, A355/Tuns Lane/Copthorne Roundabout and the A4/Mass Rapid Transit phase one will combine to produce a collective benefit across these main strategic routes in the town.

A notable improvement revealed by the data to date is an overall reduction in journey time for eastbound journeys across Slough (northbound in Windsor Road), from the starting point of the Jubilee River roundabout to the M4 junction 5 roundabout via Windsor Road/A4/A355. This reduction is over and above the reduction for the Windsor Road stretch specifically. However, there is inconsistency in the results for the journey in reverse, and other more extensive links on the wider network. Hence these figures are considered to be provisional at this stage, and the data analysis is still under review.

There is an additional need to take account of the impacts of the experimental bus lane on the A4, implemented during the summer of 2020 (as part of the emergency response to the COVID impacts, and as a preparation to ensure the recovery is not car-led. Furthermore, two subsequent major schemes are currently still in progress. These are the Stoke Road area regeneration scheme and Mass Rapid Transit phase 2. These schemes have some impact on the Heart of Slough junction and the A4/Bath Road/London Road respectively. Therefore, the data for traffic journeys across the wider network (and to some extent for the A332/Windsor Road scheme itself) are not completely representative of normal traffic conditions across Slough. There is a requirement here to continue to monitor the traffic data and to take a longer term view overall. The most appropriate review point is likely to be at the five year evaluation stage.

5.4.1. Ongoing monitoring

Traffic congestion levels will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis, and will be assessed mainly by average journey times. In addition, the signal timings at the Chalvey Road East/A412

and Herschel Street junctions will continue to be monitored and potentially adjusted in order to seek further improvements to the network traffic flow, for both north and south bound traffic movements on Windsor Road. Traffic count data monitoring will also continue to be performed specifically on the A4 approaches to the Windsor Road junction (the Heart of Slough), to further analyse the impact of current and recently completed schemes on the network. Analysis here is more involved, however, as the A4/Bath Road lane allocation has changed in recent times, with the introduction of the emergency bus lanes in 2020. An existing programme of monitoring of the A4 is currently in progress.

Furthermore, the monitoring will continue to take account of journey times and traffic levels for the wider network, and the more extensive route comprising the A355/Tuns Lane, A4/Bath Road and the A332/Windsor Road. This covers the combined impacts of the overall package of three major highway improvement schemes funded by the LGF and constructed between 2014 and 2019. As above, analysis of the impacts of the A4 element will be more complex.

5.5. Road Safety

Although not specifically one of the core objectives stated in the original business case, improvements to road safety was highlighted as one of the aspects to be covered at the evaluation stage (with this report being the first formal evaluation).

Road safety was an important priority in the design of the Windsor road Scheme. Design elements include new pedestrian crossing facilities including signal enhancements for this purpose. In particular, there is a new, dedicated pedestrian phase at the junction with the A412. The scheme also includes improved designs for all the main junctions with Windsor Road, to increase crossing safety and visibility for all road users.

In terms of statistics, the analysis in the original business case indicated that the effects of the scheme on road safety would be minimal. The expectation was that the scheme would increase traffic flows along the A332, which, without any targeted safety measures, would generate a marginal increase in traffic accidents. The scheme was therefore designed to include safety measures including the features set out above, and hence to deliver a reduction in annual number of road related accidents in this location.

Accident data has been reviewed for the two years before the construction of the scheme commence in December 2015, and for the two years following the construction of the scheme

from September 2019. The numbers of accidents (serious and slight) are shown in the tables below:

PRE start of construction

Year	Serious	Slight	Prominent Locations
2014	2	9	Junction with Ragstone Road x 3 Junction with Albert Street x 2 Junction with Vale Grove x 2
2015 (to Dec)	1	4	Junction with Ragstone Road x 2 Junction with Albert Street x 3

POST completion of construction

Year	Serious	Slight	Prominent Locations
2019 (from Sept)	0	1	Junction with Ragstone Road
2020	2	0	Junction with Ragstone Road Junction with Arborfield Close
2021 (to Sept)	0	0	

Figures were obtained from the CrashMap ProBerkshire collision reports.

These reports refer to data entered by Thames Valley Police (TVP) onto a central database.

The figures shown in the tables above show that according to TVP records, the number of accidents in the scheme location was considerably lower in the period following construction of the scheme, with only two serious incidents and one slight over two years (post scheme), compared with three serious and thirteen slight over the two years (pre-scheme).

Taken at face value, this represents a significant improvement in road safety in Windsor Road. However, the particularly low numbers obtained for the post scheme years may require further investigation. Reference is made here to previous discussions within the Safer Roads Partnership, and further discussions with Thames Valley Police, relating to the reliability of the data entered onto the system in recent years. Along with fellow Partnership members

(neighbouring local authorities), Slough Borough Council is actively seeking reassurance on this matter, and also considering possible alternative ways of maintaining incident records.

Regarding the locations identified in the TVP records for both pre and post scheme periods, the references to the junctions with Ragstone Road and Albert Street indicate the value of the improvements to these junctions in particular in the overall scheme designs. As above, further information and investigation will be required to confirm that the reductions in these locations, and over all, can be fully substantiated by the data.

6. Growth related outcomes

6.1. Growth Forecast

In terms of growth, the aim of the project was to contribute to the overall delivery 2,995 new housing units and 79,150sqm of office and ancillary space proposed, to be delivered in the town centre as part of the ongoing 'Heart of Slough' project.

The following table shows the complete list of expected outcomes relating to this scheme:

Type of infrastructure	Junction improvements, road widening, bus lanes
Type of service improvement	Relieve congestion, reduce journey times, increase journey reliability

Outcomes	Predicted	Actual
Planned Jobs connected to the intervention	2,150	TBA
Commercial floorspace constructed (square metres)	79,150	TBA
Housing unit starts	2,995	TBA
Housing unit completion	2,995	
Number of new homes with new or improved fibre optic provision	2,995	TBA
Transport Outputs		
Total length of resurfaced roads	550m	375m

Total length of newly built roads	500m of additional traffic lane	375m
Total length of new cycle ways	350m	265m
Follow on investment at site	Redevelopment for 125 housing units	TBA

6.2. Comment on outcomes

The highway and transport measures in the above table have been delivered. The variations in length were due to changes at the detailed design stage.

In terms of growth across the borough, in the immediate area surrounding the stretch of highway that has been enhanced, the Heart of Slough and more widely on the approaches, the project outcomes are subject to ongoing review. It is not possible to establish at this stage the number of houses built, property developed or occupied, or jobs created. Ongoing monitoring is in progress in order to establish these outcomes. Evidence of such outcomes will be provided to the LEP / Berkshire Transport forum at the earliest opportunity.

7. Links to wider Growth Fund projects and Network activity

The A332/Windsor Road, perpendicular to the A4, provides a key entrance to and exit from the borough. Similar to the A355 / Tuns Lane / Copthorne roundabout project, the work here has included substantial road widening, along with junction improvements, all designed to improve traffic flow, junction control and road safety.

The A355/Tuns Lane, again perpendicular to the A4/Bath Road was a forerunner to the overall construction package in terms of delivery. This location has itself been subject to a major network infrastructure project facilitated by the Growth Fund.

The third of three inter-linked major LGF funded projects, the Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) scheme, phase 1, was completed in early 2018. The respective major road projects have complemented each other and presented combined, network wide improvements.

SMaRT phase 2, which extends the route as far as Heathrow, is currently in progress on site. The Council has received a Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRP) funding contribution to support this project.

The combination of these three major schemes, plus the extension of MRT, will provide considerable additional network performance, with improved traffic flow, reduced congestion, and overall resilience.

8. Changing circumstances and new scenarios

The A332/Windsor Road continues to provide an important north/south route through the town. The route connects with the town centre to the north, and to the boundary with RBWM in the south. This serves all road users, but it continues to provide in particular for the needs of commuters, and is therefore considered one of the major strategic routes on the network.

However, the impacts of the COVID-19 restrictions were considerable and traffic patterns have fluctuated over the past two years. Following the removal of all formal restrictions, as part of the government's roadmap to recovery, it is not yet possible to identify a '*return to normal*' across the road network, and indeed exactly what the '*normal*' situation now represents.

In preparation to try to prevent a '*car based recovery*' in Slough, post COVID, the Council has implemented measures to promote more sustainable forms of travel. This has included the experimental bus lane scheme on the A4 (running through the Heart of Slough junction, tangential to Windsor Road), as well as increased promotion of both public transport patronage and active travel. More recently, the Council has been developing a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), a response to the Government's National Bus Strategy, also known as *Bus Back Better*. Windsor Road is already a major thoroughfare for buses travelling to and from the town centre, and beyond the boundary with RBWM. The BSIP is expected to have further, positive implications for Windsor Road and the connecting sections of the network.

The public uptake of active travel during the lockdown periods has in some cases been new, but in many ways this is a necessary response to the existing and long behavioural change campaign, including the Access programme, which seeks to promote sustainable travel. Most recently, an official, Government-backed e-Scooter trial scheme has been introduced in Slough. Windsor Road is one of the prominent locations for e-Scooter travel in the borough, with massive uptake already. The total number of eScooter journeys across the borough for August 2021 was

approximately 30,000. More detailed statistics on eScooter usage have been requested and will be provided when available.

One unexpected and temporary downside to the popularity of e-Scooters has been the decline in usage of bikes access via the cycle hire docking points. However, the promotion of cycling continues to be a key priority in transport policy, and is supported by the Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Following the Windsor Road scheme, with safety improvements for cyclists and pedestrians having been prominent aspects of the design, cycling and walking are numbers are expected to increase over the medium to long term.

9. Costs and financial control

Budget management was undertaken by the project manager appointed by the Council for the three major construction projects with growth funding at the time (SMaRT1, A355/Tuns Lane and A332 Cophorne Roundabout), which were all delivered by the main contractor Balfour Beatty (and in the case of the Windsor Road Scheme, subsequently the DSO). This was regularly reviewed and overseen by the Council's Head of Service for Transport.

There was a relatively minor overspend on the construction for the overall package, of approximately £150k due to compensation events arising mainly out of additional utility service related work. This additional cost was covered by the Council from capital funds.

10. Lessons Learnt

The main lessons learnt relate to construction and project matters rather than growth or funding aspects.

The eventual completion date of the scheme was approximately two years later than originally planned. This was due to the discovery of utility services in unexpected locations, despite carefully checking the plans well in advance and carrying out trial holes before the main excavations. This is a common problem in works for road purposes, and there is a limit to how much preparatory exploration can be carried out before the main works. However, more time should be factored in to the overall programme for contingencies, for example discovering unexpected services (requiring diversions) and materials (hard concrete requiring additional excavation time).

Regarding evaluation of growth, and success in realising all the various objectives, there is again a need to fully understand, at an early stage and as part of the initial project plans and business case process, exactly how the success of a scheme will be measured, and to set a realistic timeframe for evaluation. Assessing the amount of development, jobs created, houses built and so forth is not straightforward when it comes to the impact of an enhanced road junction and improved traffic flow that forms an existing, high profile thoroughfare in the borough. It can be challenging to establish a direct causal relationship between a highways project of this nature and development across the borough.

This point has been previously raised in evaluation reports relating to the A355/Tuns Lane/ Copthorne Roundabout and Mass Rapid Transit (MRT phase 1) schemes, which were interlinked (in both network and growth terms) and formed part of an overall construction package.

11. Final comments

Slough Borough Council would like to express its appreciation to the Local Enterprise Partnership for the Growth Fund financial contribution and various other forms of LEP / Berkshire Local Transport Body support enabling the delivery of this project. The Council is also grateful for the patience and understanding of motorists and residents during the work. Despite considerable temporary disruption to commuting and other network activity, the resulting road layout of the A332 / Windsor Road has facilitated a genuine, long-term improvement to the network. The predicted growth benefits are still being reviewed, to date, and the expectations are that these benefits will be realised over the next five years. This time period is considered realistic, not least, to allow the re-establishment of what might be considered '*normal*' conditions, in terms of both traffic and development patterns.

Appendix 2

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Independent Assessment Summary Report: A332 Windsor Road Improvements

One Year Impact Report

October 2021

www.hatch.co.uk

Independent Assessment

- i. This technical note provides an independent assessment of the one-year Impact Report submitted by Slough Borough Council (SBC) in relation to the A332 Windsor Road project.
- ii. The scheme received £2.7 million funding through the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) Local Growth Fund deal. As part of the on-going assurance process, TVB LEP requires all funded schemes to produce one-year and five-year post-implementation impact reports to demonstrate how each scheme has performed against expectations.

Process

- iii. The one and five-year impact reports are expected to assess the following elements of the scheme:
 - a. did it get built?
 - b. was it to plan?
 - c. was it on time?
 - d. was it to budget?
 - e. is it working ok?
 - f. what impact has it had?
 - g. any learning points?
- iv. Hatch have applied these criteria, but also sought to use the process as positive influence to identify specific ways in which project scheme design or delivery could be enhanced to enhance future value of this scheme or other future LEP funded schemes.

Scheme Summary

- v. Slough Borough Council received £2.7m from the TVB LEP Local Growth Fund as part of an overall estimated scheme cost of £5.0m. TVB LEP's contribution to the scheme accounted for 54% of all estimated scheme costs.
- vi. The Windsor Road Improvements scheme included a programme of junction improvements, road widening and related works on the A332 / Windsor Road. The scheme represented a major urban

renewal project at this prominent entrance point to the town centre, with a substantial redesign of the road layout, signal configurations, and crossing points along the route.

- vii. This specific project focussed on improving conditions for general traffic as well as buses along this strategic route, making journeys quicker and more reliable. The A332 is one of the main strategic routes in the borough, being a continuation of the A332 flyover from Royal Windsor Way and the subsequent spur road to the roundabout at the Jubilee River, just below the boundary between Slough and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
- viii. The planned work consisted of the following elements:
- Re-designed road layout and lane configuration, with particular focus on the junction with Chalvey Road East/A412.
 - Re-designed key junctions along the route, most prominently the junctions with Chalvey Road East/A412, Herschel Street, Vale Grove and Ragstone Road.
 - New traffic islands along the route, enhancing crossing points.
 - New pedestrian phase in the signalised crossing at the junction with Chalvey Road East/A412/Albert Street.
 - Widening of the carriageway between the junction with the A412/Albert Street and the junction with Ragstone Road.
 - Extended and enhanced traffic island approaching the junction with Ragstone Road.
 - Full resurfacing with new lane markings
 - Drainage improvement
- ix. It is important to note that the planned improvements were part of a much wider strategic programme being delivered by Slough Borough Council. This programme includes:
- The A355 / Tuns Lane / Copthorne roundabout project
 - The A355/ Tuns Lane, perpendicular to the A4/Bath Road
 - The Slough Mass Rapid Transit (SMaRT) scheme phases 1 & 2
- x. It was proposed that the combination of this project's scope, plus the additional schemes in Slough, provided additional network performance and improve traffic flow, congestion and overall resilience of the network.

- xi. The evaluation report reviewed the outcomes of the scheme against the objectives stated in the business case. The objectives were as follows:
- To relieve localised congestion and enhance accessibility to the southern gateway to Slough Town Centre
 - Provide a direct high quality, safe, convenient and reliable travel to Slough Town Centre and improve public perception of transport in Slough
 - Support economic development in Slough town centre and contribute to tackling deprivation
 - Mitigate future impact of noise and air pollution and greenhouse gases on the A332 route
- xii. The scheme was completed in September 2019. However, due to the impacts of COVID-19 and notably the impact on traffic levels across the network, it was agreed with TVB LEP and the Berkshire Local Transport Body that the monitoring report be delayed until all the COVID restrictions had been lifted.

Review Findings

General Observations

- xiii. The planned works started January 2016, with SBC not stating if the project started on time. The programme overran significantly with the completion date approximately 2 years later than originally planned due to a number of delays during the construction period. This main issue was the presence of utility services in unexpected locations. SBC stated that it was the slow response from the utility company, due in part to the high-profile location on the network, which led to extensive redesigns.
- xiv. Additionally, SBC replaced Balfour Beatty as the main contractors in 2017 with the scheme unfinished. The Council stated value for money considerations and the need to ensure the costs did not escalate as a result of delays as the key reasons for replacing Balfour Beatty. SBC took the decision to transfer responsibility for the remainder of the construction programme to their recently created in-house Direct Service Organisation (DSO). Hence, there were additional delays during the transition period between the contractors.

- xv. The scheme costs slightly overran by £150,000 from the initial estimate of £5 million, representing a 3% increase. The additional cost was from compensation events arising mainly out of additional utility service-related work. The One Year evaluation report confirmed that the extra cost was covered by SBC from capital funds.
- xvi. The one-year report includes helpful visual evidence of the scheme implementation of the improvements. These clearly bring to life how the project funding has made enhancements and changes to the highway, carriageway, footway, junction and signalling enhancements, have led to a safer, more convenient and more reliable thoroughfare for all road users.
- xvii. SBC has collected data for the Northbound route entering Slough – Windsor Road from the Jubilee River roundabout to the Heart of Slough comparing both AM Peak (07:00 to 10:00) and PM Peak (15:00-19:00). Data was collected before construction, mid-scheme and post construction (before and during COVID). Comparing before construction and immediately after construction showed that, for the AM peak period, there has been a reduction in average journey time of eight seconds, with a corresponding increase in average speed of 1.1mph. The improvement in the PM period is greater, with a reduction of 38 seconds, and a corresponding increase in average speed of 1.4mph. Data for the full COVID-19 lockdown period (Oct-Dec 2020) and recently in August-Sept 2021 have also been provided.
- xviii. Additionally, SBC has collected data before construction, mid-scheme, post construction (before and during COVID) for the Southbound route existing Slough – Heart of Slough to the Jubilee River roundabout via Windsor Road. The analysis shows that by comparing pre-construction and immediately post construction (Oct-Dec 2019), there was a relatively small reduction in average journey times, with increases in average speeds during the AM peak hours. For PM Hours, a greater reduction in average journey time and related increase in average speed have been recorded. Data for the full COVID-19 lockdown period (Oct-Dec 2020) and recently in August-Sept 2021 have also been provided.
- xix. SBC didn't provide an overall conclusion of the scheme but from the information provided they have demonstrated that the scheme is

meeting the objectives set out in the business case. From the lessons learnt section they state the need for more time to be factored into the overall programme for contingencies, for example discovering unexpected services and materials (hard concrete requiring additional excavation time).

Conclusions

- xx. The SBC one-year impact report is a well-constructed and balanced document, making good use of the available evidence at this stage. Whilst the agreed delay in producing this report was agreed with TVB LEP and Berkshire Local Transport Body some initial data has been provided to show the impacts of the scheme before COVID.
- xxi. The report also provides very helpful photographs of after scheme completion which brings to life the changes which have been implemented because of TVB LEP and SBC investment. While the report helpfully outlines how the scheme has addressed congestion, safety concerns and reliability in Slough along the network. The scheme did also face a number of challenges including the completion date being approximately 2 years later than expected with a small cost overrun of £150k met by the council.
- xxii. It would be useful helpful to see an overarching conclusion section which draws upon all elements of the scheme and makes final remarks about the success of the scheme.
- xxiii. Undertaking of a one-year impact report is too soon to provide a realistic assessment of the actual outcomes of the scheme. The Council expects to be able to provide a much more detailed review of the scheme at the five-year evaluation report milestone.
- xxiv. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:
 - While the report provides a positive indication of the scheme reducing congestion and safety and provides some initial data, providing more detailed analysis for the five-year report will be important to evaluate the impact and outcomes of the scheme. Data from surveys about the operation of the scheme, local air

quality levels, accident data, ATC survey counts to measure traffic flows.

- The report includes a section about growth forecast relating to commercial and housing units coming forward relating to this scheme and wider schemes coming forward. SBC should closely monitor what was predicted for jobs, floorspace, housing etc against which of these benefits arise.
- For future monitoring reports, providing clarity on the different stages and milestones of the scheme and what happened during construction. The report should state for each milestone what was the estimated date of completion and the actual date of completion.
- For future monitoring reports, provide a breakdown of costs to show that the estimated costs in the business case against those actually incurred.
- For future monitoring reports, the report should include key maps and locations of the scheme interventions and, where possible, visual evidence to help contextualise the pre-scheme investment position and the post-investment position.

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, Lead Officer to the BLTB

Item 6: 2.12 Reading: South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) phases 1 & 2 – One Year Evaluation Report

Purpose of Report

1. At your meeting in March 2017, you approved guidance for the preparation of one- and five-year-on impact reports for BLTB funded local transport schemes.
2. Per reports received at the March and July 2021 BLTB meetings, it was agreed that due to the Covid pandemic, the pending one-year impact reports would be temporarily suspended until a sufficient resumption of normal, or near normal, traffic movements resumed. It has been agreed by the Berkshire Transport Officers that we are probably now at this point, enabling reports to be drawn up and submitted.
3. This report introduces the one-year impact report for scheme 2.12 Reading: South Reading MRT Phases 1 & 2.

Recommendation

4. You are recommended to note the reports from the scheme promoter and the independent assessor.

Other Implications

Financial

5. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Risk Management

6. The government requires all LEPs to have Assurance Frameworks which set out governance arrangements and financial procedures. One of the specific requirements for transport schemes is to require scheme promoters to submit impact reports one- and five-years post implementation.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

7. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of the Assurance Framework.

Supporting Information

8. Reading Borough Council received £4.5m in LGF towards the cost of this £5.62m scheme.
9. The one-year on impact report is attached at Appendix 1; and the independent assessor's report is attached at Appendix 2.

Conclusion

10. The Independent Assessor concludes that the South Reading MRT Phase 1 and Phase 2 report, prepared by WSP on behalf of RBC, is a comprehensive and detailed document. It provides an insightful view on the scheme, its rationale and objectives, as well as initial findings on how the scheme is performing against key metrics and indicators. It also helpfully sets out the context that this project is the first part of a much bigger vision for delivering the whole South Reading MRT.
11. The scheme was delivered on budget and with three of its four component sections delivered by the project completion date/scheme opening in early 2018. The report is very clear on the reasons and justification for why the final section of the scheme was delayed and delivered as part of the construction contract for Phase 3 and 4 (2019). The available data analysed and presented in the report must be viewed within that context.
12. The report clearly outlines the positive and successful outcomes of the scheme. The available data has shown significant improvements in bus journey times, service reliability and frequency, as well as increased capacity and patronage levels have consequently improved. The scheme is also having an initial impact on behavioural change, with increases in the share of bus trips increasing post-scheme implementation.
13. Significant new commercial and industrial floorspace has also come forward in the area following the scheme's opening, as well as around 3,500 new homes. The early phases of the South Reading MRT, albeit part of a much larger future bus network, is already playing a role in supporting sustainable economic growth and providing alternative public transport options to residents and workers.
14. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:
 - Given this is an early phase of a much larger MRT scheme, it will be important to continue to monitor bus modal share and overall vehicle counts along the corridor against forecasts going forward. A key test for the scheme, and the full MRT network once completed, will be that the road capacity freed up by those shifting to bus is 'locked-in' and not just filled by other car users.
15. There is no further action required.

Background Papers: None.

Reading Borough Council

South Reading MRT Phase 1 and 2 Monitoring Report

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides a review of the Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) scheme Phases 1 and 2 after its opening. The report aims to evaluate how successful the scheme has been so far, by comparing the assumptions made in the original 2015 Business Case against the scheme's current outcomes.

BACKGROUND

The A33 corridor is the main strategic route for vehicles travelling to and from Reading Town Centre to the south of Reading, linking to major employment locations, major housing developments and M4 Junction 11. It carries high volumes of traffic between the M4/A33 and Town Centre, providing access to over 50,000 Town Centre jobs. The route is also the main access for the major south Reading employment area of 10,000 jobs and 1,600 homes.

The A33 is busy throughout the day, carrying in the region of 46,000 vehicles each day in 2019. The route is particularly busy during AM and PM peak periods when employees arrive and leave the business units and parks along the corridor and when there are high levels of traffic into Reading town centre. In the AM peak period (08:00-09:00), for example, inbound flows were in the region of 2,700 vehicles.

Reading Borough Council (RBC) and the business parks along the A33 have made significant investment in expanding the bus services along the corridor, delivering high-quality, low noise and low emission bus services (approximately 1.2 million trips per annum).

The level of congestion resulted in the need to add extra vehicles during the peak periods and reduce the peak period frequency to offset the impact of high journey time variability.

At the time of writing the Business Case, there was planned growth of some 7,500 and 1,500 homes along the corridor. A further three strategic development locations were planned south of the M4 Junction 11 (2,500 homes), South Wokingham (2,500 homes) and North Wokingham (1,500 homes), which have planning obligations to the delivery of express bus or mass rapid transit services. Around 50% of the traffic on this corridor is forecast to be associated with planned development by 2026.

If nothing was done, congestion on the network would continue to increase and economic growth would be constrained. In addition, there is a risk that existing businesses would consider relocating out of the Thames Valley area and possibly elsewhere in Europe.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEME

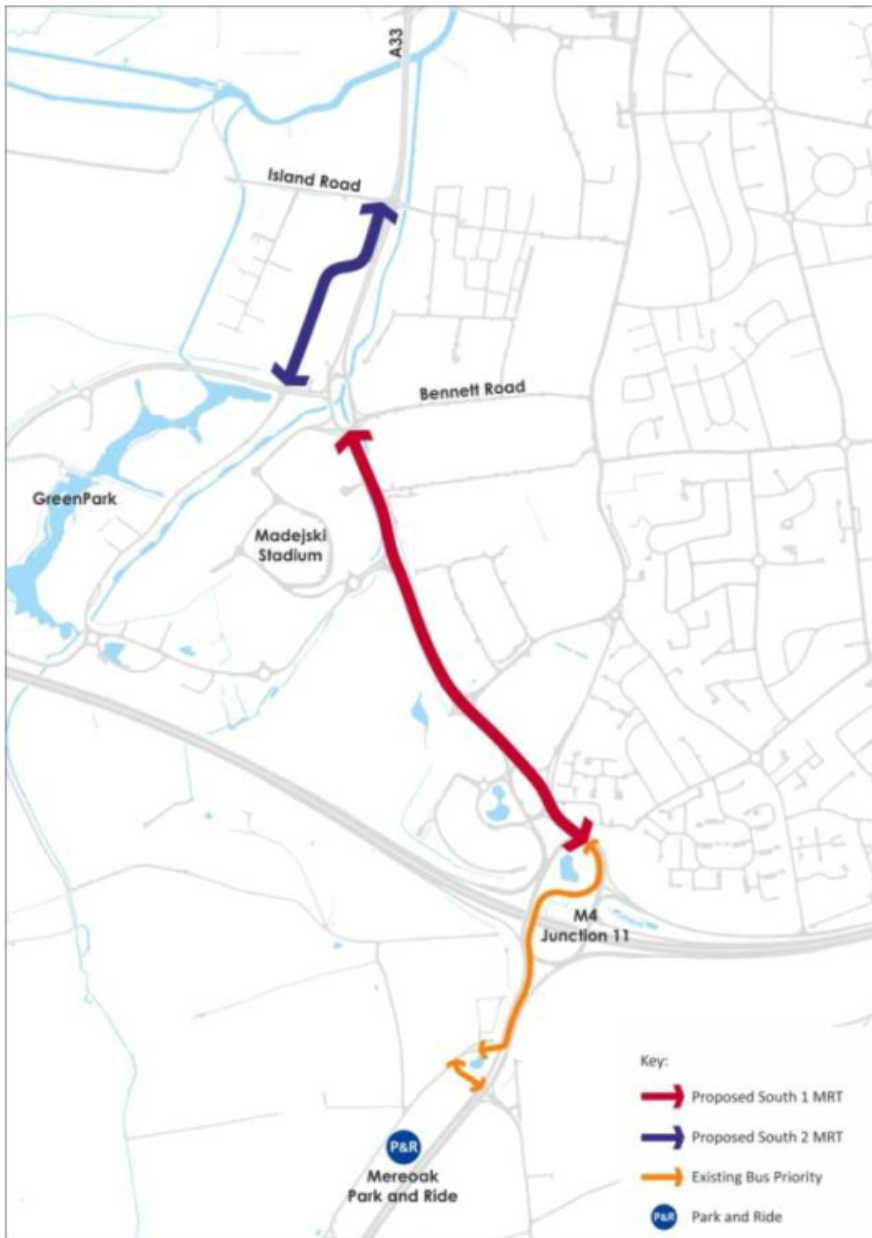
The MRT scheme provides a series of new and improved bus priority measures on the A33 to improve journey times and reliability for public transport on the main corridor into Reading. It links central Reading to the existing/proposed residential and employment areas to the south of Reading including Green Park and Southside. It also connects into the bus lanes through M4 Junction 11 to the new MereOak Park and Ride facility. (The bus priority through the M4 Junction 11 was completed in summer 2010.)

This scheme is a long-established element of Reading's strategy to deliver economic growth and housing and has been included in Reading's three Local Transport Plans and adopted Core Strategy. Phases 1 and 2 are just the initial phases of the overall vision for the corridor of a fully segregated public transport route between the town centre and Mere oak Park and Ride, which in the future could be used by guided buses, trams or an autonomous public transport system.

LOCATION

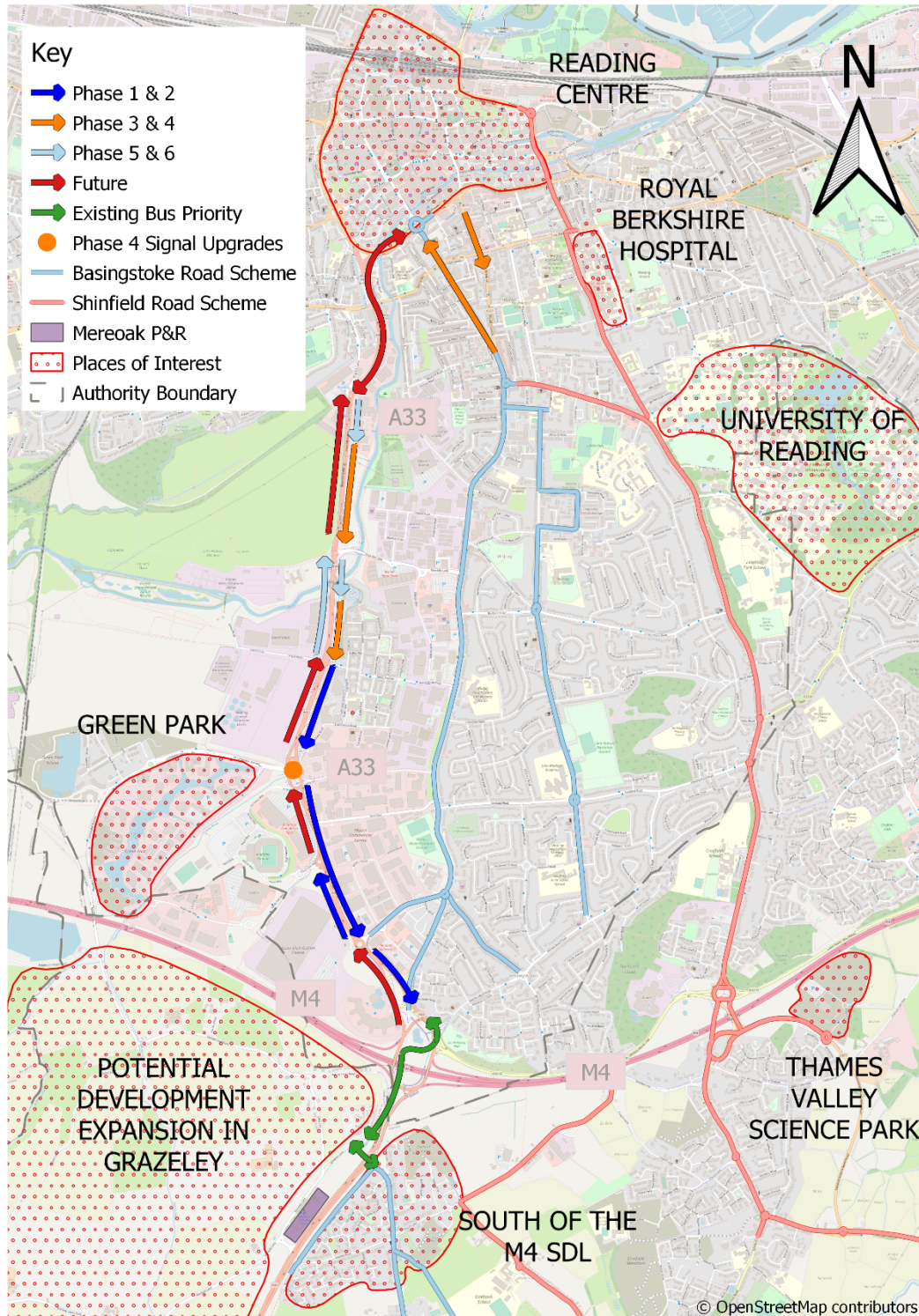
The Business Case stated that Phase 1 of the scheme would run between M4 Junction 11 and A33 junction with Longwater Avenue (Green Park), while Phase 2 would run between the A33 junctions with Longwater Avenue (Green Park) and Island Road. **Figure 1-1** below shows the phasing plan taken from the Business Case.

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-1: Extent of South Reading MRT Phase 1 and 2



Since the Phase 1 and 2 Business Case, the location of the scheme was amended with the agreement of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) through regular progress reporting on the scheme. **Figure 1-2** shows the updated location of the scheme, including future phases of the MRT.

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-2: Updated extent of South Reading MRT



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The scheme aims to improve the connectivity of central Reading with the key employment and development sites along the A33 corridor for bus travel, providing a more attractive alternative to the private car. It will also provide a key north-south link to a potential wider Thames Valley Berkshire MRT network.

Delivery of the scheme would increase travel capacity and improve reliability and journey time for bus services along the route.

- Provide a cost-effective solution to accommodate future travel demand on the A33 Corridor for local trips;
- Provide a high quality, sustainable and attractive alternative to car travel;
- Increase capacity for movement of people and thereby reduce congestion along the Corridor;
- Reduce journey times along the A33 Corridor and improve journey time reliability; and
- Support economic development on the A33 Corridor and within the wider sub-region.

MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

For each of the objectives set out above, at least one ‘indicator of success’ had been established to determine what constitutes successful delivery of any transport-related improvements. Indicators and related targets are outlined below in **Table 1-1**.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-1: Success Indicators

Indicator	Target
Provide a high quality, safe, convenient and reliable alternative to the car and improve public perception of transport in Reading	Increase public transport modal split Increase public transport capacity Improve public transport reliability Improve public transport journey times Improve personal security Reduce casualty frequency and severity
Alleviate the severe congestion on the A33 by allowing better flow of traffic	Improve (or keep to neutral) car journey times
Stimulate development, increase in jobs and resident population in South Reading	Number new jobs created Number homes built

COST ESTIMATES

The Business case estimated the total cost for Phase 1 to be £3,690,700 and Phase 2 to be £1,870,700. These included a 30% contingency derived from a detailed project Quantified Risk Assessment (QRA). Therefore, the total cost of both phases was estimated at £5,560,000. A 20% optimism bias had been assumed.

The scheme was prioritised for Local Growth Deal (LGF) Funds with additional match funding provided by RBC including from the private sector including through Section 106¹ (S106) obligations. Existing S106 funding was specifically committed to this scheme. In addition, there had been significant contributions from the local authority to progress the scheme, including scheme development costs.

¹ Section 106 (S106) obligations are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. They are often referred to as ‘developer contributions’. <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/pas-topics/infrastructure/s106-obligations-overview>

The Business Case stated that LGF was going to provide 80% of the scheme funding, with 20% local contribution.

SCHEME DETAILS

UPDATED PHASING PLAN

Phase 1 and 2 was completed to the phasing plan found in the Business Case in the southbound direction. Phase 1 commences at the A33 junction with Longwater Avenue (Green Park) and travels south to M4 Junction 11. Phase 2 runs between the A33 junction with Island Road and follows southbound to Longwater Avenue (Green Park). However, travelling northbound, Phase 1 and 2 only included the section between the Imperial Way junction and the South Oak Way junction. Feasibility of the remaining sections have been reassessed as part of planning for future phases of the scheme.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

TIMESCALES

No major constraints had been identified within the Business Case that would affect the delivery of Phase 1 of the scheme which was proposed to be fully within the existing highway land and safeguarded land for MRT. Phase 2 was offline across brown field third party owned land, and although the route was safeguarded and had planning permission within the Southside scheme this permission was not subsequently delivered by the developer.

The Business Case stated that the delivery of the scheme was dependent on developer contributions as part of the local contribution for the scheme, however all the required funding was secured by legal agreements to enable the contributions to come to fruition.

The opening year for the scheme was proposed as the year 2018.

Table 3-2 below details when the phases were completed.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-2: Phasing completion dates

Phase	Direction	Location	Completion
Phase 1	Southbound	Imperial Way to RIBP	December 2016
Phase 1	Southbound	Bennett Road to Imperial Way	December 2017
Phase 2	Southbound	Kennet Island to Bennett Road	December 2017
Phase 2	Northbound	Imperial Way to South Oak Way	November 2019

The table above shows that Phase 1 was broken down into two sections, the first of which was completed in December 2016 and the second section, along with Phase 2 southbound, followed a year later in December 2017. However, the remaining section of Phase 2 northbound was not completed until November 2019 due to efficiencies with it being combined with the contract for constructing Phase 3 of the scheme, which had subsequently been awarded funding. Therefore, while the majority was completed ahead of the proposed opening year of 2018, the only northbound section of the scheme was one year later than originally planned.

ACTUAL SCHEME COSTS

The Business case estimated the total cost for Phase 1 and 2 to be £5,560,000, which included a 30% contingency derived from a detailed project Quantified Risk Assessment (QRA). A 20% optimism bias had been assumed.

The current spend to date of Phases 1 and 2 is £5,450,000 million. The remaining costs will be spent on contract retentions and the five-year Monitoring Report.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF THE OUTCOMES

The scheme aims to improve connectivity between central Reading and the key employment and development sites along the A33 corridor and support economic development along the corridor. The scheme also aims to increase travel capacity and improve reliability and journey times for bus services along the A33 corridor, providing a more attractive alternative to the private car.

A range of metrics have been examined to determine whether these objectives have been met and whether the scheme is delivering the expected benefits. Each objective is examined in detail below.

IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Full Business Case identifies a number of economic opportunities along the A33 corridor and wider area which will be supported by the scheme, including:

- 7,500 jobs at Southside, Shinfield Science Park, Worton Grange, Station Hill and Royal Mail site;
- 1,500 homes at Green Park, Kennet Island, Station Hill, Chatham Place and Royal Mail sites; and
- 2,500 homes South of the M4 junction 11 within Wokingham's SDL.

The scheme has improved sustainable transport connections between central Reading and the key employment and development sites along the A33 corridor, which has in turn supported economic growth in the vicinity of the scheme.

There have been several development schemes along the A33 corridor in recent years, for example the Reading Gateway scheme at Worton Grange (comprising of commercial units, warehouses, houses and a new Premier Inn) and the Island Road development (comprising of commercial units and warehouses).

The residential and commercial development completions in South Reading for the year following Phases 1 and 2 opening are summarised in **Table 4-3** below. The scheme has also improved access between central Reading and areas to the south of the M4 such as Shinfield, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross, so completions in these areas have been included. Although some of these developments are not located directly off the A33 corridor, they fall within the wider area identified as being supported by the scheme in the Full Business Case.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-3: 2017-2018 development completions

Area	Dwellings (units)	Business/Industrial (sq. m)	Retail (sq. m)
Shinfield/ Spencers Wood/ Three Mile Cross	2,833	0	0
South Reading	695	32,559	4,555
Total	3,528	32,559	4,555

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-3 shows that in the year following Phases 1 and 2 opening, approximately 3,500 dwellings, 32,500sq. m business and industrial development and 4,500sq. m retail development was delivered in the vicinity of the scheme. This economic growth along the A33 corridor has been supported by the improved connectivity between these areas and central Reading.

INCREASED TRAVEL CAPACITY

The scheme has increased travel capacity by bus along the A33 corridor. The improved journey times and reliability along the corridor (which is discussed in detail below) has allowed bus services to operate with higher frequency. In 2016, before the introduction of the scheme, there were 10 services from Mere oak Park and Ride to central Reading in the AM peak, and 9 services from central Reading to Mere oak Park and Ride in the PM peak. In 2018, after the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2, an additional service was provided between Mere oak Park and Ride to central Reading in the AM peak.

The increased travel capacity is reflected in the annual passenger growth for Greenwave bus services. Greenwave annual patronage changes between 2016 and 2018 are displayed in **Table 4-4** below.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-4: Greenwave annual patronage

Year	Annual Greenwave patronage	Annual Mere oak Park and Ride patronage
2016	881,231	127,898
2017	950,214	184,698
2018	1,070,554	238,897

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-4 shows that annual Greenwave bus patronage increased by approximately 190,000 passengers between 2016 (before the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2) and 2018 (after the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2) as a result of improved travel capacity along the corridor. The annual Mere oak Park and Ride patronage increased by approximately 111,000 passengers.

The increased travel capacity is also reflected in the increase in cars parked at Mere oak Park and Ride before and after the introduction of the scheme. **Table 4-5** shows that approximately 37,500 additional cars parked at Mere oak Park and Ride between April 2017 – March 2018 (after scheme opening) compared with August 2015 – March 2016 (before scheme opening).

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-5: Cars parked at Mere oak Park and Ride

Year	Cars parked
August 2015 – March 2016	29,978
April 2016 - March 2017	54,366

IMPROVED RELIABILITY AND JOURNEY TIMES

The introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2 has improved the reliability of bus services along the A33 corridor. Real time bus information has been extracted for the x60 route, which is the direct service between the town centre and Mere oak Park and Ride along the A33. In 2016, before the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2, 93% of buses were on time or early and 7% of buses were late. In 2018, after the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2, 97% of buses were on time or early and 3% of buses were late. The scheme has therefore improved bus reliability and punctuality along the A33 corridor by 4%.

The scheme has also improved journey times along the A33 corridor. Bus journey times from Mere oak Park and Ride to central Reading in the AM peak decreased from 18 minutes in September 2016 (before the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2) to 17 minutes in April 2018 (after the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2). Bus journey times from central Reading to Mere oak Park and Ride in the PM peak decreased by 16% from 25 minutes to 21 minutes. Prior to the introduction of the scheme, the PM peak southbound buses were required to travel via Basingstoke Road in order to reliably achieve a 25-minute trip to Mere oak Park and Ride. However, after completion of the outbound MRT sections, the bus priority measures enabled buses to travel the more direct route along the A33. The off-peak travel times have also decreased by one minute in each direction.

The improved journey times and reliability are reflected in the timetable changes before and after the introduction of the scheme, which are shown in **Table 4-6** below.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-6: Timetable changes

Direction	Time period	September 2016		April 2018	
		Journey time (min)	No. of trip	Journey times (min)	No. of trips
Mere oak – Central Reading	AM peak	18	10	17	11
	Off-peak	15		14	
Central Reading - Mere oak	Off-peak	16		15	
	PM peak	25	9	21	9

These journey time savings have been multiplied by the 2018 Mere oak Park and Ride patronage to calculate the total journey time savings for bus users in the year after scheme opening. The total journey time savings for bus users in the year after scheme opening have been estimated at 6,403 vehicle hours. The following assumptions have been made in this calculation:

- 2018 Mere oak Park and Ride patronage has been used instead of total annual Greenwave patronage as Mere oak Park and Ride passengers benefit from the total length of MRT Phases 1 and 2. This is a worst-case assessment, as a proportion of Greenwave passengers will also benefit from the scheme.

- National Trip End Model (NTEM) factors have been used to split the patronage into AM peak, inter-peak/ off-peak and PM peak demand.
- It has been assumed that all Mere oak Park and Ride passengers travel into central Reading in the AM peak and out of central Reading in the PM peak. In the inter-peak/off-peak it has been assumed that 50% of Mere oak Park and Ride passengers travel into central Reading and 50% of Mere oak Park and Ride passengers travel out of central Reading.

The introduction of the scheme has also dramatically reduced the mileage lost due to congestion. The mileage lost due to congestion on the Greenwave bus services between April 2016 and September 2018 is shown in **Table 4-7**.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-7: Mileage lost due to congestion

Period	Total mileage lost due to congestion
April 2016 – Sep 2016	183.89
Oct 2016 - Mar 2017	691.31
April 2017 - Sep 2017	101.53
Oct 2017 - Mar 2018	163.59
April 2018 - Sep 2018	15.36

Table Error! **No text of specified style in document.-7** shows that between April 2016 – September 2016, before the introduction of the scheme, 183.89 miles were lost due to congestion. The introduction of the bus priority measures along the A33 corridor dramatically reduced the number of miles lost due to congestion, with just 15.36 miles lost due to congestion between April 2018 – September 2018.

The data presented above clearly demonstrates that the MRT Phases 1 and 2 has improved reliability and journey times for bus services along the A33.

BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

The scheme has improved public transport connections along the A33 corridor, with the aim of providing a more attractive alternative to the private car.

Traffic count data along the A33 has been extracted before and after the introduction of the scheme to understand the impact of the scheme on traffic flows. The average two-way daily traffic outside Green Park Business Park increased from 20,855 vehicles in 2016 to 21,235 vehicles in 2018. Whilst this is an increase of 380 vehicles, it is a lower increase than expected based on NTEM growth rates for Reading. NTEM forecasts a 3% increase in traffic between 2016 and 2018 in Reading, which would equate to average two-way daily traffic flows in 2018 of 21,485. The observed 2018 data is 250 vehicles lower than the NTEM forecast, which demonstrates that private car trips along the A33 were lower than expected forecasts.

The analysis of traffic count data suggests that private car trips along the A33 in 2018 were lower than expected forecasts. It is likely that some of these trips have shifted from highway to bus travel as a result of the improved public transport connections along the A33 corridor.

Average car occupancy has been applied to the daily traffic flows to calculate the number of people travelling along the A33 corridor by car. These have been converted to annual values and compared to annual bus patronage in **Table 4-8** below.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-8: Mode share

	Average annual person trips		Mode share	
	2016	2018	2016	2018
Bus person trips	881,231	1,070,554	7%	8%
Car person trips	12,253,599	12,476,873	93%	92%
Total person trips	13,134,830	13,547,427	100%	100%

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-8 shows that the bus mode share of trips along the A33 corridor increased by 1% in 2018 (after the introduction of the scheme) compared to 2016 (before the introduction of the scheme). This demonstrates that there has been a shift from highway to bus travel as a result of the improved public transport connections along the A33 corridor.

Travel Plan surveys between 2016 and 2018 have been requested from the managers of Green Park Business Park to understand the impact of the scheme on employee travel behaviour, however unfortunately this information is not available.

As discussed above, the introduction of MRT Phases 1 and 2 has resulted in increased patronage for Greenwave bus services, and an increase in the number of cars parked at MereOak Park and Ride. Whilst some of these new users may have been generated by the new residential and commercial development along the corridor, some of the new users are due to a mode shift from highway, resulting in fewer private car trips being made.

COLLISION ANALYSIS

Collision data has been analysed to determine the impact of the Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) scheme on the number of collisions that occur along the route corridor. Reading Borough Council provided collision data for all reported Personal Injury Collisions (PICs) which occurred within the scheme extent and nearby approaches for the period 2016 to 2018.

For the purpose of this analysis, the years 2016 and 2018 have been used as these were the years pre and post implementation of the scheme.

Figure 4-3 and **Figure 4-4** depict the location of each collision by severity for each year.

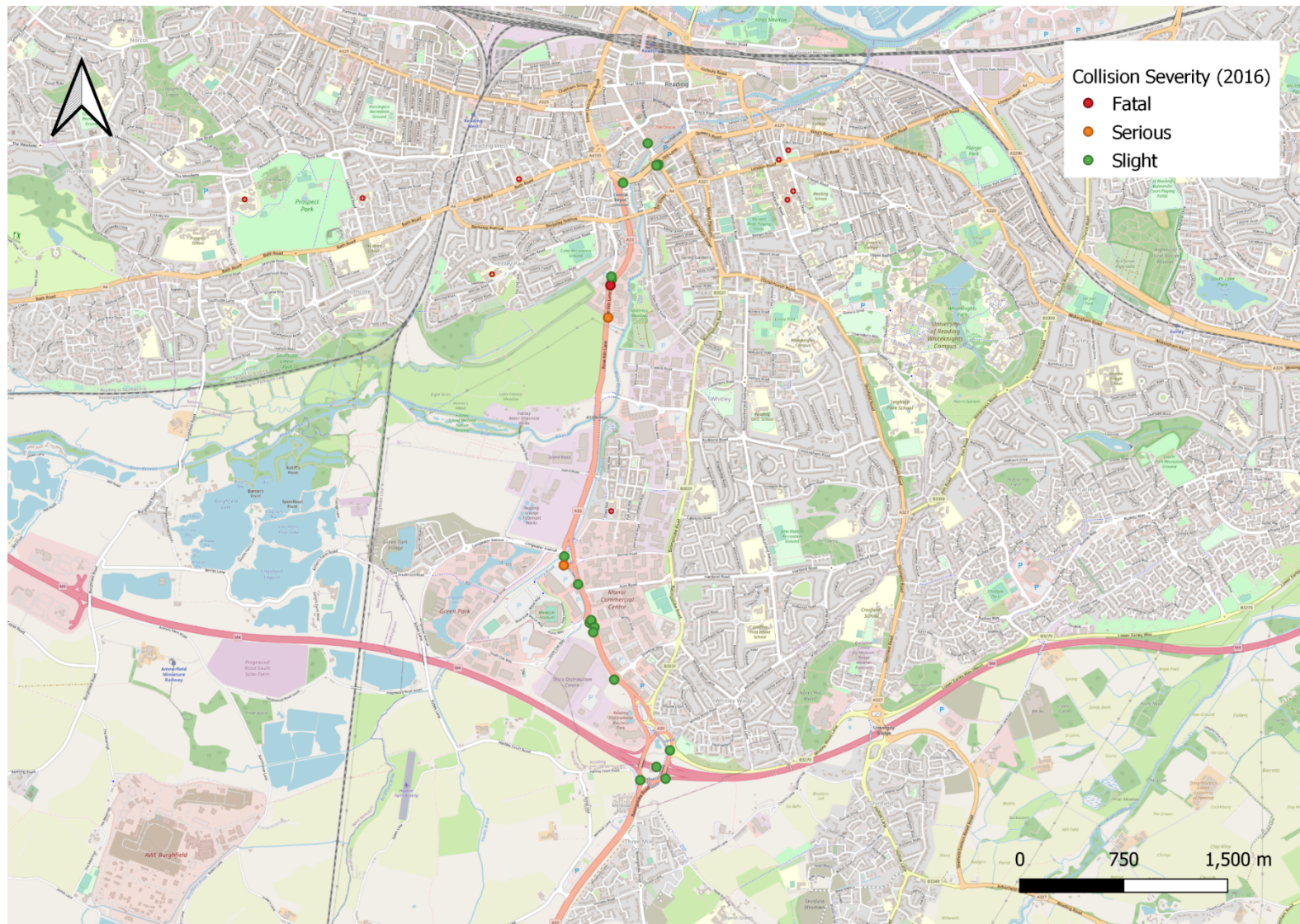


Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-3: 2016 Collisions by Severity

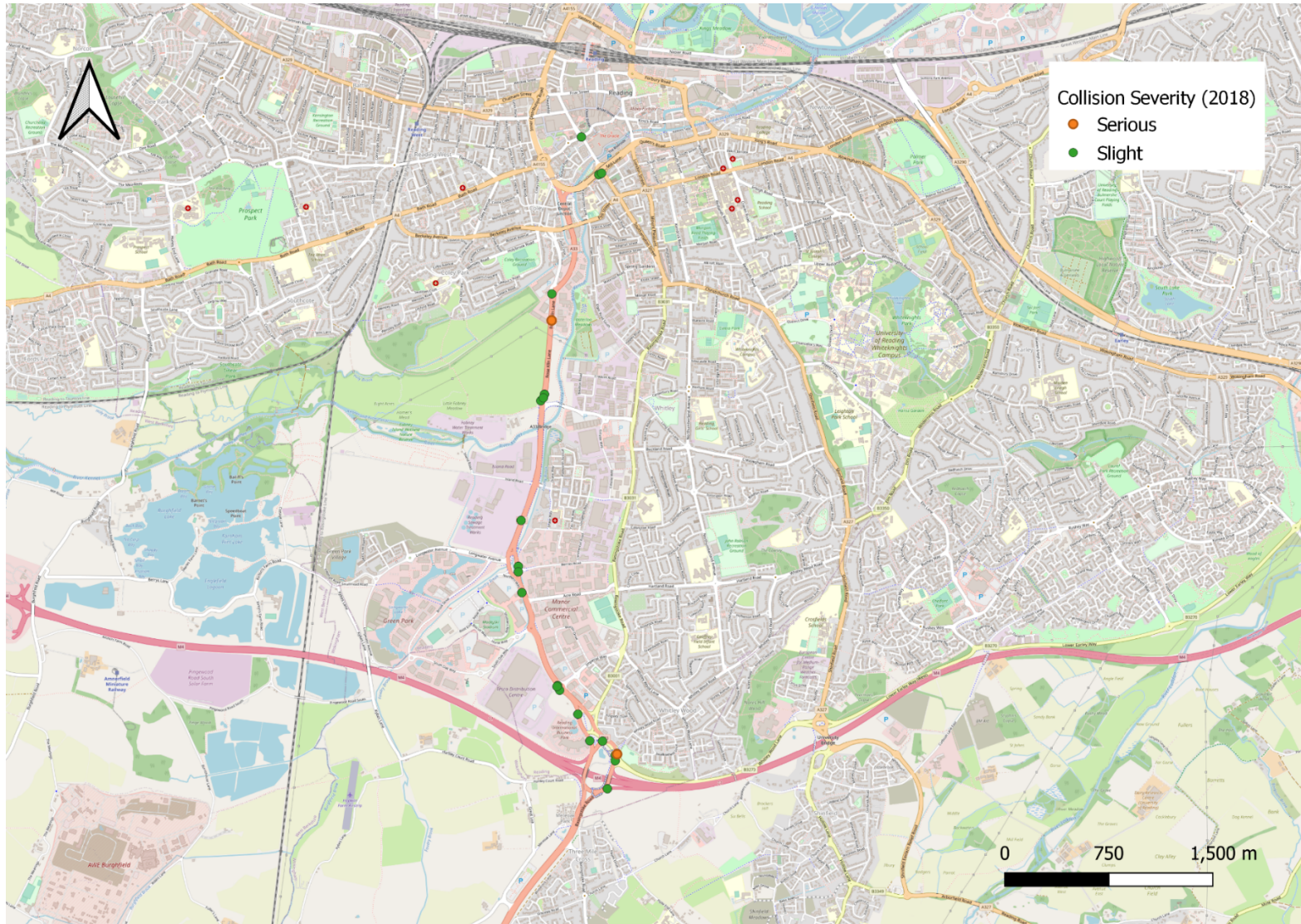


Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-4: 2018 Collisions by Severity

Summary of collisions

There was a total of 63 reported collisions in 2016 and 2018, of which seven were serious and one was fatal.

Table 4-9 summarises the collisions that occurred in 2016 and 2018 by severity.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-9: Collision summary by year and severity

	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
2016	1	3	19	23
2018	0	4	36	40
Grand Total	1	7	55	63

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-9 shows that there were more collisions in 2018 compared to 2016, with nearly two-thirds of the reported collisions that occurred during the study period occurring in 2018. In terms of severity, the proportion of Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) collisions was highest in 2016 (17%) compared to 10% in 2016. This is due to the increased number of slight collisions in this period. The increase in collisions may be linked to the slight increase in vehicle flow along the route indicated earlier.

Analysis shows that most collisions occurred in daylight conditions with fine weather and dry road surface as shown below.

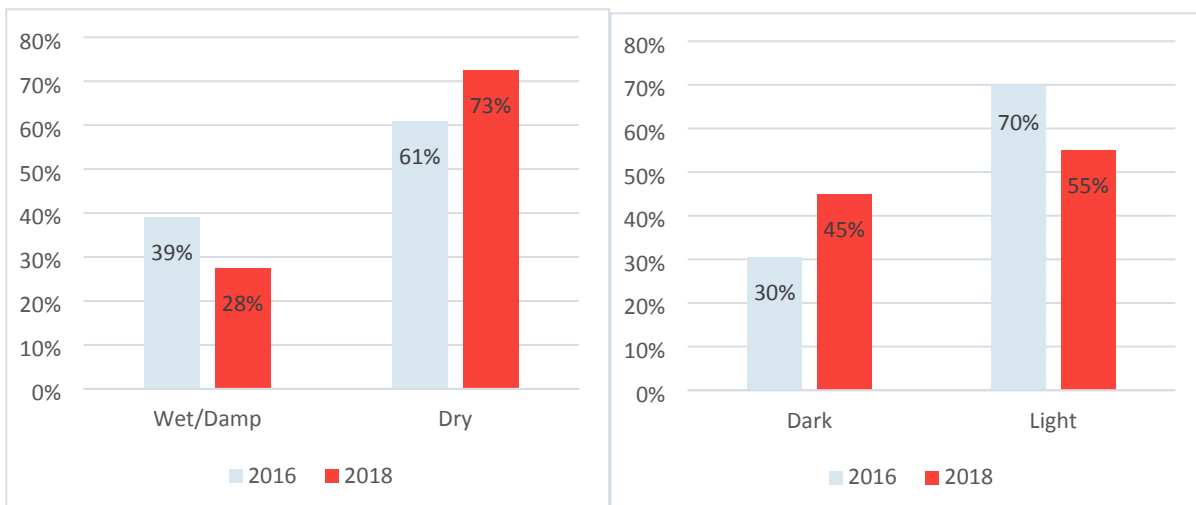


Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-5: Road Conditions

Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-6: Lighting conditions

Between the two years, the number of collisions in wet/damp road surface conditions fell 10% in 2018, however the number of collisions in the dark increased 15% compared to 2016 levels. It is unclear whether these changes are connected to the implementation of the scheme.

Road users involved

Table 4-10: presents the number of the vulnerable road users (VRUs) involved in the collisions. VRUs in this instance have been assessed in the following groups: motorcycles, pedal cycles, pedestrians, children and OAPs.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-10: Vulnerable road user involvement by year and severity

Severity	Year	Motorcycles	Pedal Cycles	Pedestrians	Children	OAPs	Total
Fatal	2016	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2018	0	0	0	0	0	0
Serious	2016	0	1	1	0	0	2
	2018	2	0	0	0	0	2
Slight	2016	2	2	0	1	2	7
	2018	8	6	5	2	2	23
All Severity	2016	2	3	1	1	2	9
	2018	10	6	5	2	2	25

A total of nine VRUs were involved in collisions in 2016, a total of 25 VRUs were involved in collisions in 2018. As a proportion of VRUs per collision, this equates to 39% in 2016 and 63% in 2018, indicating a significant rise in collisions involving VRUs since the scheme was implemented.

When looking at the severity, the increase in VRUs is seen in the slight collisions, where there was a significant increase in the number of motorcycles and pedestrians being involved in collisions, and a slightly lower increase in collisions involving pedal cycles. **Table 4-11** shows the VRU proportions for all severities across the collisions in the study period.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-11: Proportion of collisions involving VRUs by year

Year	Motorcycles	Pedal Cycles	Pedestrians	Children	OAPs
2016	17%	33%	17%	33%	50%
2018	83%	67%	83%	67%	50%

Turning Movements

Collision data from the pre and post implementation periods was analysed to investigate whether the scheme had an impact on collision patterns involving turning vehicles along the route. This is shown in **Table 4-12**.

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-12: Collisions involving turning movements by year and severity

	Year	Left	No turn	Right
Fatal	2016	0	1	0
	2018	0	0	0
Serious	2016	1	2	0
	2018	2	2	0
Slight	2016	2	16	1

	2018	4	25	7
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This data indicates that the greatest changes in turning movement collisions were in the slight collisions. This is anticipated given the increase in the number of slight collisions.

Taking the increase in the number of slight collisions between 2016 and 2018 as a baseline (89% increase), it can be seen that the increase in slight left and right turn collisions is higher than the baseline (100% and 600% respectively).

Collision Location

The collision locations in 2018 have typically followed the patterns of those in 2016, being in or close to the same locations. A combined plot of collision locations is shown below in **Figure 4-7**.

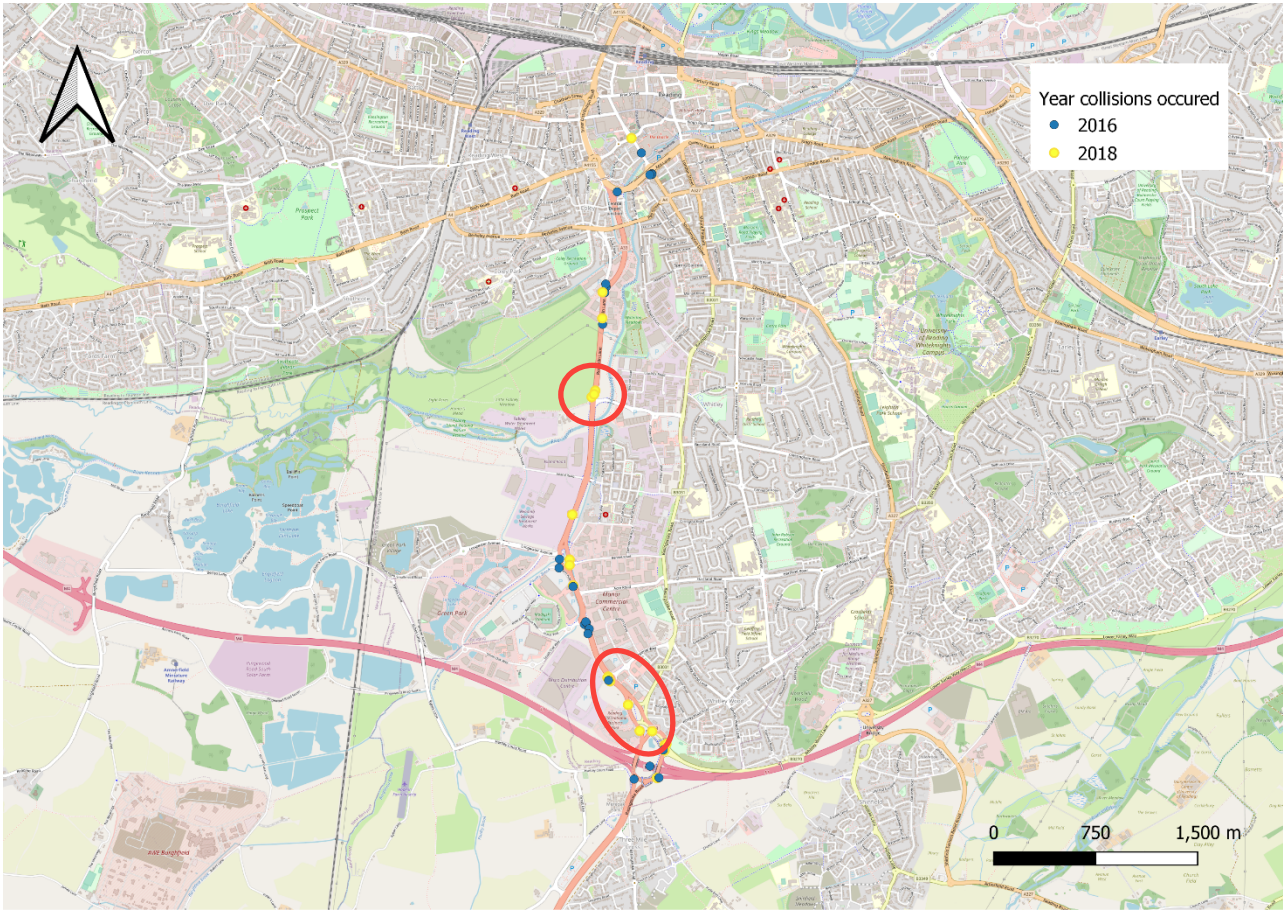


Figure Error! No text of specified style in document.-7: 2016 and 2018 collision locations

There are two locations where there are new groupings of new collisions, one is at the junction with Rose Kiln Lane and the other is the Imperial Way roundabout. In 2016 there was a small group of collisions at the South Oak Way roundabout, there were no collisions at this location in 2018.

Vehicle Class

Analysis of the collision data provided indicates that buses and minibuses were not involved in any of the collisions in 2016 or 2018.

Summary & Conclusions

Analysis of the collision data has shown that there have been some changes in the collision patterns in 2018 when the Reading MRT scheme was opened compared 2016 prior to construction commencing. The number of slight collisions has increased, with the collisions typically involving a higher proportion of pedestrians, pedal cyclists or motorcyclists. Fewer collisions occurred in wet/damp conditions, but there was an increase in the number of collisions occurring in the dark.

The data provided for analysis provides a snapshot of the collision patterns. It is recommended that a fuller assessment is undertaken once collision data for three or five years post-opening is available, so that any seasonal or temporal variations can be taken into account, as well as providing an opportunity for the scheme to settle and road users to understand and adapt to the changes as a result of the scheme.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the successful outcomes of Phases 1 and 2 was the delivery ahead of the 2018 proposed opening year for the majority of the scheme. Phase 1 was completed in December 2016 and 2017 and Phase 2 southbound was completed in December 2017. One of the main reasons for this was due to the majority of the scheme being built within the highway boundary and safeguarded land specifically for the MRT scheme.

Therefore, in order for future phases to be as successful as Phase 1 and 2, by being built on time, the scheme should avoid third party land wherever possible, and be delivered within the highway boundary. This would prevent having to acquire any additional land and seek the relevant permissions.

Despite the successful outcomes of the phases listed in the sections above, there is evidence to show congestion along the corridor is increasing again, and the bus services are gradually becoming more unreliable. This is discouraging people from using the bus as a mode of transport as well as using the route to access the town centre and destinations along the corridor by all modes. If this was to continue, there would be detrimental economic and social impacts within Reading and the sub-region, constraining economic growth and in particular the economic and social recovery from the current pandemic. Therefore, it is important that future phases of the scheme to go ahead. This is reinforced with the results of the 2019 visioning consultation for the Reading Transport Strategy 2036, which highlighted 93% of the public thought making public transport journeys faster and more reliable would be effective in encouraging more sustainable travel in Reading.

The period of 2019-20 from October to February saw a significant increase in lost mileage due to congestion. However, the congestion was identified as being that on Green Park specifically on South Oak Way and Brook Drive in the afternoon peak. This resulted in buses that served these two roads being delayed by up to 20 minutes on a single trip. These parts of the Greenwave route are on private roads on the Green Park estate and have no bus priority. Due to the interworking of peak buses delays created here had a knock-on effect on the rest of the service. In response the next timetable change from April 2020 would have separated all previous interworking so that buses that were delayed on Green Park would go back to Green Park, those on the MereOak Park and Ride circuit would stay away from Green Park.

Overall, this report demonstrates the huge benefits delivered by the South Reading MRT Phases 1 and 2 scheme in terms of increased passenger numbers, employment and housing delivery, modal shift to sustainable travel and the resulting decongestion, air quality and carbon benefits. Ideally the full South Reading MRT scheme would have been delivered in a single phase, however due to limited funding availability it has been split into a phased delivery, therefore the overriding lesson learnt from these initial phases is the importance of continuing to deliver the full scheme to ensure the full benefits can be delivered.

End of report

Appendix 2

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Independent Assessment Summary Report: South Reading MRT Phases 1 & 2

One Year Impact Report

October 2021

www.hatch.co.uk

Independent Assessment

- i. This technical note provides an independent assessment of the one-year Impact Report submitted by Reading Borough Council (RBC) in relation to the South Reading MRT Phase 1 and 2 project.
- ii. The scheme received £4.48 million funding through the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) Local Growth Fund deal. TVB LEP contributed 80% of total projects costs, which were £5.56m, with local contributions covering the remaining costs.
- iii. As part of the on-going assurance process, TVB LEP requires all funded schemes to produce one-year and five-year post-implementation impact reports to demonstrate how each scheme has performed against expectations.

Process

- iv. The one and five-year impact reports are expected to assess the following elements of the scheme:
 - a. did it get built?
 - b. was it to plan?
 - c. was it on time?
 - d. was it to budget?
 - e. is it working ok?
 - f. what impact has it had?
 - g. any learning points?
- v. Hatch have applied these criteria, but also sought to use the process as positive influence to identify specific ways in which project scheme design or delivery could be enhanced to enhance future value of this scheme or other future LEP funded schemes.

Scheme Summary

- vi. Reading Borough Council (RBC) received £4.48m from the TVB LEP Local Growth Fund as part of an overall estimated scheme cost of £5.56m for Phases 1 and 2 of the South Reading Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) scheme. TVB LEP's contribution accounted for 80% of all estimated scheme costs.

- vii. The South Reading MRT scheme is a long-established part of Reading's strategy to deliver sustainable economic growth and housing in the borough. The scheme has been included in Reading's three Local Transport Plans and the adopted Core Strategy (2019).
- viii. Phases 1 and 2 deliver the initial phases of an overall vision for the A33 corridor to be a fully segregated bus/public transport route between the town centre and MereOak Park and Ride. For context, we understand that Phases 3 and 4 are currently under construction with further funding received from TVB LEP, with business cases for Phases 5 and 6 currently in development. While the route currently is based on buses, the segregated corridor could potentially be used for guided buses, trams or autonomous public transport in the future.
- ix. The A33 corridor was chosen for MRT investment as it is the main strategic route for vehicles travelling to and from Reading Town Centre to the south of Reading, while it is also links to major employment and housing locations, as well as J11 of the M4. The A33 carries high volumes of traffic between the M4/A33 and Town Centre (c.46,000 vehicles daily in 2019) with busy AM and PM peaks, providing access to over 50,000 Town Centre jobs. The route is also the main access for the major south Reading employment area of 10,000 jobs and 1,600 homes.
- x. While RBC and business parks along the corridor have made significant investment in expanding bus services in previous years (e.g. the M4 J11 bus priority measures), the corridor is characterised by significant congestion during AM and PM peaks when employees arrive and leave the business units and parks along the corridor and when there are high levels of traffic into Reading town centre. In addition, the wider area is also a focus for further employment and housing growth over the local plan period and beyond, with 50% of traffic forecast on the A33 corridor associated with planned development of the next decade.
- xi. Phases 1 and 2 of the MRT scheme aim to be the starting phases to improve the connectivity of central Reading with the key employment and development sites along the A33 corridor for bus travel, providing a more attractive alternative to the private car. It will also provide a key north-south link to a potential wider Thames Valley Berkshire MRT network. In providing an attractive alternative to the car, the delivery of these initial phases is intended to increase travel capacity and improve reliability and

journey times for bus services along the route. The summary objectives of the scheme are to:

- Provide a cost-effective solution to accommodate future travel demand on the A33 corridor for local trips;
- Provide a high quality, sustainable and attractive alternative to car travel;
- Increase capacity for movement of people and thereby reduce congestion along the corridor;
- Reduce journey times along the A33 corridor and improve journey time reliability; and
- Support economic development on the A33 corridor and within the wider sub-region.

xii. The one-year impact report outlined a number of indicators of success for these objectives to determine what constitutes successful project delivery.

- Provide a high quality, safe, convenient and reliable alternative to the car and improve public perception of transport in Reading:
 - Increase public transport modal split
 - Increase public transport capacity
 - Improve public transport reliability
 - Improve public transport journey times
 - Improve personal security
 - Reduce casualty frequency and severity
- Alleviate the severe congestion on the A33 by allowing better flow of traffic:
 - Improve (or keep to neutral) car journey times
- Stimulate development, increase in jobs and resident population in South Reading
 - Number of new jobs created
 - Number of homes built

xiii. It should be noted that since the Phase 1 and 2 business case approval stage, the location of the scheme was amended with the agreement of TVB LEP and Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB) through regular **progress**

reporting on the scheme. The RBC one-year impact report included a revised map of all South Reading MRT phases. The key change was for Phase 2 as the intention to route the MRT through private land between Green Park and Island Road was amended with the route being southbound only on the A33.

Review Findings

General Observations

- xiv. The original business case outlined that the opening year for Phases 1 and 2 was 2018. The progress made in the construction programme for Phase 1 and Phase 2's implementation was as follows:
- Phase 1 Southbound - Imperial Way to RIBP – completion December 2016
 - Phase 1 Southbound – Bennett Road to Imperial Way – completion December 2017
 - Phase 2 Southbound – Kennett Island to Bennett Road – completion December 2017
 - Phase 2 Northbound – Imperial Way to South Oak Way – completion November 2019
- xv. The RBC report concludes that three sections of the Phase 1 and Phase 2 scheme were delivered ahead of the proposed opening year of 2018. Given the identified changes within the scheme design and location for Phase 2, as well as the opportunity to deliver efficiencies in combining this element with the contract for constructing Phase 3 of the scheme, it was only the northbound section of the scheme which was delayed from early 2018 to late 2019.
- xvi. Current spend to date on the Phase 1 and Phase 2 scheme is reported to be £5.45m. The overall estimated cost for the scheme was £5.56m, which included relevant contingency allowances. The scheme will be completed to budget by RBC, with the remaining £110,000 being allocated by RBC on outstanding contract retentions and the five-year monitoring.
- xvii. The RBC report was prepared by WSP and provides a thorough section on reviewing and evaluating the early outcomes of the scheme against the scheme's original objectives. The report draws on available data, where possible, across a range of metrics – see below.

- xviii. It is appreciated that this is a Year 1 evaluation and many of the datasets used cover the 2018 period, as well as some years preceding investment. However, given the delays to some sections of Phase 2 (completed in late 2019), as well as the impact of Covid-19 delaying the evaluation, data from 2019 and or 2020 could have potentially been drawn upon in the report to provide some further context and insights as to the performance and impact of the Phase 1 & 2 scheme in the corridor.
- xix. The report focusses on the role of the corridor improvements supporting improved connectivity and economic development objectives, particularly around key employment and housing locations in Reading. For example, the business case identified the potential for sites within the A33 corridor to support 7,500 jobs and 4,000 new homes. The RBC report highlights that during 2017-18, the first year of the scheme's implementation, that approximately 3,500 dwellings were developed and 32,550 sqm of business/industrial floorspace was developed.
- xx. From speaking with RBC officers, we understand that the development of each specific site was not directly tied (i.e. was not 'dependent development') to the implementation of the MRT, but that the MRT scheme is identified as a policy within the Local Plan to ensure that economic growth is supported by targeted transport infrastructure investment. This demonstrates a positive and 'joined-up' approach to delivering sustainable economic growth in Reading.
- xxi. Increasing travel capacity is another metric used to measure the scheme's initial success. The data presented (2016-2018) shows significant bus patronage growth. In 2017-18, when most of the scheme had opened, passenger growth was +120,340 (13%) on the Greenwave service and +54,199 (30%) on the Mere oak P&R services. Compared to 2016 levels, growth in passengers by 2018 was approximately +190,000 (21%) and +111,000 (87%). Such significant growth in bus users is also reflected in the overall numbers of cars parking at Mere oak P&R. In the period April 2017 - March 2018, an additional 37,500 cars (125%) were parking at the P&R facility compared to 2015-2016.
- xxii. It is clear from the data presented to date that the delivery of Phase 1 and 2 of the MRT scheme has enabled a faster, more reliable and more frequent bus service to be delivered along the A33 corridor with more buses recorded as being on time and fewer delays. In addition, journey time

reductions are also evident compared to pre-scheme. For example, the Central Reading to Mere oak P&R journey time was 21 minutes compared to 25 minutes in 2016 in the PM peak.

- xxiii. The report also includes analysis of measures such as annual journey time savings for bus users and annual reductions in mileage lost due to congestion. The impact of the introduction of the prioritised bus measures can be seen clearly in this latter measure. In April – September 2016 183 miles were lost due to congestion, whereas post implementation, April – September 2018, just 15 miles were lost – a significant reduction.
- xxiv. Behavioural change is also examined in the report, given a key objective of the scheme is to provide an attractive alternative to the car. Mode share analysis reflects the increased bus trips being made in 2018 compared to 2016, with 8% of trips on the corridor being made by bus compared to 7% in 2016, while the share of car journeys fell from 93% to 92%. However, data on traffic counts taken outside Green Park Business Park in 2016 and 2018 indicates an increase in overall vehicles on the corridor (+380 vehicles), albeit an increase which was lower than the NTEM forecasts.
- xxv. Therefore, while the early analysis of scheme impact is positive in increasing bus modal share and shifting car journeys to bus users, it will be important to continue to monitor modal share and overall vehicle counts along the corridor against forecasts. A key test for the scheme, and the full MRT network once completed, will be that the road capacity freed up by those shifting to bus is ‘locked-in’ and not just filled by other car users. One of the key metrics of success for the scheme was to ‘improve or keep neutral car journey times’. While congestion and journey time data was not available for this report, it should be examined in future MRT monitoring reports.
- xxvi. As reducing casualty frequency and severity is a measure of success for the scheme, the RBC report includes a detailed and comprehensive analysis of collisions along the corridor prior to and post scheme delivery. The analysis highlighted how an increase in ‘slight collisions’ has arisen between 2016 and 2018, with these typically involving pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists. It was noted that no buses were involved in any collisions. There was also an increase in collisions occurring in the dark, with fewer collisions happening in wet conditions.

- xxvii. Given this increase in collisions, as well as a change in the pattern of collisions, RBC are recommending that a fuller assessment is undertaken once data for 3 and 5 years post opening is available. This is a sensible step and provides an opportunity for all road users to understand and adapt to changes in the road layout linked to the scheme. However, as further phases of the MRT are in development, it will be important for all stakeholders to be aware of this data and to reflect on any early insights to inform the implementation of MRT priority routes and highway changes.

Conclusions

- xxviii. The South Reading MRT Phase 1 and Phase 2 report, prepared by WSP on behalf of RBC, is a comprehensive and detailed document. It provides an insightful view on the scheme, its rationale and objectives, as well as initial findings on how the scheme is performing against key metrics and indicators. It also helpfully sets out the context that this project is the first part of a much bigger vision for delivering the whole South Reading MRT.
- xxix. The scheme was delivered on budget and with three of its four component sections delivered by the project completion date/scheme opening in early 2018. The report is very clear on the reasons and justification for why the final section of the scheme was delayed and delivered as part of the construction contract for Phase 3 and 4 (2019). The available data analysed and presented in the report must be viewed within that context.
- xxx. The report clearly outlines the positive and successful outcomes of the scheme. The available data has shown significant improvements in bus journey times, service reliability and frequency, as well as increased capacity and patronage levels have consequently improved. The scheme is also having an initial impact on behavioural change, with increases in the share of bus trips increasing post-scheme implementation.
- xxxi. Significant new commercial and industrial floorspace has also come forward in the area following the scheme's opening, as well as around 3,500 new homes. The early phases of the South Reading MRT, albeit part of a much larger future bus network, is already playing a role in supporting sustainable economic growth and providing alternative public transport options to residents and workers.

xxxii. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:

- Given this is an early phase of a much larger MRT scheme, it will be important to continue to monitor bus modal share and overall vehicle counts along the corridor against forecasts going forward. A key test for the scheme, and the full MRT network once completed, will be that the road capacity freed up by those shifting to bus is 'locked-in' and not just filled by other car users.

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, Lead Officer to the BLTB

Item 7: 2.15 Bracknell: Martins Heron Roundabout – One Year Evaluation Report

Purpose of Report

1. At your meeting in March 2017, you approved guidance for the preparation of one- and five-year-on impact reports for BLTB funded local transport schemes.
2. Per reports received at the March and July 2021 BLTB meetings, it was agreed that due to the Covid pandemic, the pending one-year impact reports would be temporarily suspended until a sufficient resumption of normal, or near normal, traffic movements resumed. It has been agreed by the Berkshire Transport Officers that we are probably now at this point, enabling reports to be drawn up and submitted.
3. This report introduces the one-year impact report for scheme 2.15 Bracknell: Martins Heron Roundabout.

Recommendation

4. You are recommended to note the reports from the scheme promoter and the independent assessor.

Other Implications

Financial

5. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Risk Management

6. The government requires all LEPs to have Assurance Frameworks which set out governance arrangements and financial procedures. One of the specific requirements for transport schemes is to require scheme promoters to submit impact reports one- and five-years post implementation.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

7. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of the Assurance Framework.

Supporting Information

8. Bracknell Forest Council received £2.9m in LGF towards the cost of this £3.8m scheme.
9. The one-year on impact report is attached at Appendix 1; and the independent assessor's report is attached at Appendix 2.

Conclusion

10. The Independent Assessor concludes that the BFC one-year impact report is a well-constructed and balanced document, making good use of the available evidence at this stage. In particular, new survey counts have been undertaken in September 2021 to assess levels of demand along the corridor since the improvements were implemented compared to 2013, as well as analysis of journey times along the corridor. The report also provides very helpful photographs of the before and after context for the scheme which brings to life the changes which have been implemented as a result of TVB LEP and BFC investment in the corridor.
11. While the report outlines how the scheme has addressed the multiple challenges identified along the corridor, particularly the reduction in delays associated with traffic congestion at peak times, access and delays linked to the school, and implementation of enhanced adaptive signal technology, these infrastructure changes have been measured and analysed at a time of significant and potentially permanent user change linked to the pandemic.
12. While BFC recognises that undertaking a one-year impact report is particularly challenging against a backdrop of such fundamental user change, they see this reduction in demand as a positive outcome which in addition to the proposed changes has led to a better managed traffic flows and quicker journey times for corridor users. While this is a positive initial outcome from the project, a key test will be how the improvements in journey time savings and other benefits seen thus far stand up to increasing traffic volumes if traffic demand changes increase. This will only be able to be tested in subsequent years from on-going monitoring annual exercises or at the five-year review.
13. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:
 - While the impact report provides a positive position based upon the latest available data, given the timing of the project and the recent surveys, further understanding of the impact of the project on reducing delays and congestion along the corridor should be undertaken in subsequent years.
 - Follow-on counts/surveys in future years can be undertaken, as potentially, traffic demand gradually increases, as the implications of lockdowns and the evolution of working practices emerge. This approach to future monitoring would provide greater assurance on project impacts and outcomes to TVLEP and BFC.
 - The scheme also focussed on addressing a number of challenges along the corridor beyond just journey times and congestion (e.g. cycling and pedestrian needs, environmental improvements, safety etc). Going beyond qualitative and inferred assessments of these types of observed changes, future monitoring and evaluation could also consider tracking/counting different corridor users, air quality and road safety data along the corridor compared to pre-investment.
 - Future monitoring reports may also want to consider the inclusion/use of any insights from the Licensed Victuallers School (e.g. the Principal or governing body) as to the potential positive impacts on school users accessing and existing the school, as well as on the schools operational needs.
 - Providing further clarity on what caused the £150,000 overspend covered by BFC. It will be helpful for similar projects to consider what types of challenges are faced in delivering infrastructure projects of this nature and estimating scheme costs.

- A helpful leaning point for all monitoring reports is to include key maps and locations of the scheme intervention locations and, where possible, visual evidence to help contextualise the pre-scheme investment position and the post-investment position.

14. There is no further action required.

Background Papers: None.



A329 Corridor Improvements 12 Month Evaluation Report

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 In 2016, Bracknell Forest Council submitted a business case to the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVBLEP) to secure funding for improvements to the A329 corridor.
- 1.1.2 This corridor runs from Coppid Beech Roundabout, which is just across the border in Wokingham Borough, through central Bracknell and out towards the Heatherwood Roundabout in Ascot which is in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). It forms part of the original inner ring road developed in the post-war years, and the main capacity constraints today are the junctions where radial and orbital routes intersect.
- 1.1.3 The project focussed on the Martins Heron roundabout (the intersection of A329 London Road / New Forest Road / Long Hill Road) to the east of Bracknell and included associated junction improvements and minor alterations to the A329 London Road corridor.
- 1.1.4 This particular stretch of the route between the Martins Heron roundabout and Fernbank Road intersections with A329 London Road had been identified for improvement, as it had become characterised by poor journey times and peak hour traffic queuing in both directions.
- 1.1.5 Solutions were therefore developed to address these issues, thus improving journey times and traffic flows, improving safety and reducing carbon emissions. They were also developed to help improve accessibility for non-car modes. The improvements were designed to create a managed corridor and gate the traffic levels through the junctions, particularly in the eastbound direction.
- 1.1.6 This report has been prepared to evaluate the 12-month performance of the improvements to the eastern section of the A329 corridor in line with the requirements of TVBLEP. It would have been produced in March 2020, however the Covid-19 pandemic delayed this to September 2021 when traffic had settled into a newly established pattern following the removal of Government restrictions.

1.2 SCHEME DETAILS

- 1.2.1 The works undertaken included;

- Replacement of Martins Heron Roundabout with a fully signalised junction;
- Improvements to the existing signal junction at A329 London Road / Swinley Road / Priory Road including upgrading the signal equipment and controller. This improvement also included the introduction of MOVA to control the signals at the junction.
- Improvements to the existing signal junction at A329 London Road / Fernbank Road, including widening of the westbound approach and eastbound exit on A329 London Road and the introduction of MOVA.
- Each junction included pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities to link to the National Cycle Route 422, which runs along the northern side of A329 London Road.

1.2.2 The scheme also included modifications to the entrance and exit of Licensed Victuallers School to the east of the Swinley Road / Priory Road signals comprising of the following;

- Introduction of a dedicated entry lane to remove queuing eastbound traffic from A329 London Road;
- Introduction of an island to enforce the banned right turn movement out of the site on to A329 London Road;
- Extension of the nearside eastbound lane from the school exit to the A329 London Road / Fernbank Road junction to minimise disruption to through traffic on the A329.

1.2.3 These improvements were part of a wider programme to improve access between the M3 and M4 via the A322, A329 and A329M.

2 Scheme Build

2.1 PROJECT PROGRAMME

2.1.1 The key delivery stages were detailed on the project programme, outlining an overall 22-month construction period to complete the improvements to the corridor.

2.2 SCHEME BUILD PHASE 1

2.2.1 Between April 2017 and September 2017, BFC delivered three separate elements of the overall A329 improvement scheme. The works formed phase 1 of the overall planned improvements for this corridor. Phase 1 consisted of the following elements which are detailed below:

- Improved exit lane from Licensed Victuallers School
- Improved entry lane into Licensed Victuallers School
- Widening of the A329 London Road

2.2.2 *Improved exit lane from Licensed Victuallers School.* The exit from the school had a dedicated left turn only lane introduced which enabled vehicles to exit the school without the need to find a gap in traffic. This had two benefits. 1), It stopped the practice of vehicles on the A329 having to slow down or stop to allow vehicles to exit, thus maintaining vehicle flow on the main road, and 2) it also allowed vehicles to exit the school more efficiently, which in turn prevented a queue building up through the school drop-off and pick up area. Previously this would sometimes queue back through the school's entrance, causing congestion on the A329 London Road to the west.

2.2.3 *Improved entry lane into Licensed Victuallers School.* The introduction of a dedicated left turn entry lane into the school allowed vehicles to slow down and turn left separately from the main A329 London Road traffic. This prevented the unnecessary delay to through traffic that had characterised the approach previously. In addition, if a queue forms into the school, as had been previously observed, this would now remain in the left turn lane, again preventing it from blocking the A329 through route. The right turn lane into the Priory Road signals was also lengthened as part of these works to improve the queueing capacity into this busy junction.

2.2.4 *Widening of the A329 London Road.* Widening the A329 London Road to the east of the Fernbank Road junction provided wider and longer approach lanes into the signalised junction heading towards Bracknell. This improvement enabled two lanes of

vehicles to approach the traffic signals comfortably, without the need for larger vehicles to encroach into the second lane. These efficiencies improved the overall capacity of the junction.

2.2.5 The improvements to the Licensed Victuallers School entrance and exit were undertaken between June and August 2017, with the exit being completed prior to the entrance works. The traffic management required the removal of the central hatched lane and a permanent contraflow to maintain through flow of traffic. There was no reduction in the number of lanes for through traffic during this phase.

2.2.6 The widening of London Road to the east of the Fernbank Road junction was undertaken between April and August 2017. Traffic management involved off-peak lane closures, with capacity maintained through the corridor during peak periods. The widening was undertaken by working on the north side first to widen the exit merge lane. This afforded more road space to enable the southern side to be widened thereafter.

2.2.7 In all three areas, footpaths were maintained, however there was restricted access/ narrow footways during the construction period.

2.3 SCHEME BUILD PHASE 2

2.3.1 Phase 2 was programmed to start on 2nd January 2018, allowing a gap between phase 1 and 2 of approximately four months. This gap was timed to coincide with the opening of the new town centre and its first Christmas when traffic volumes were expected to be greater than usual.

2.3.2 Three further elements of the overall A329 London Road scheme were implemented during this phase, thus completing the highway improvements on this part of the corridor. The second phase consisted of:

- London Road/ Martins Heron junction traffic signalisation
- Improvements to the London Road / Priory Road traffic signals
- Improvements to the London Road / Fernbank Road traffic signals
- Pedestrian / Cycle Crossing facilities

2.3.3 *The Martin Heron Roundabout improvements* were programmed to start on 2nd January 2018, with a construction period stretching over approximately 13 months. This began with the removal of the physical roundabout island and the islands on the approach

arms. Each of the arms were then constructed for the installation of signals, with the junction being commissioned February 2019.

- 2.3.4 *The London Road / Priory Road traffic signals upgrade* also started in January 2018 and for practical reasons coincided with essential gas main repair works at the junction. To facilitate these combined works, both Priory Road and Swinley Road were temporarily closed for approximately four weeks at the A329 London Road junction. The traffic signals were refurbished to incorporate MOVA to enable the signals to operate more efficiently when adjusting to local traffic conditions. The ability of the junction to respond automatically to changing demands was thus improved.
- 2.3.5 *The London Road / Fernbank Road signals upgrade* took place during the school summer holidays between July and August 2018. These works required the traffic signals to be temporarily turned off for a period of approximately four weeks. The signals were also refurbished to incorporate MOVA, thus enabling them to operate more efficiently.
- 2.3.6 *Pedestrian / Cycle crossing facilities* – In order to improve links to National Cycle Route 422 which runs along the northern side of the A329 London Road, each junction improvement included either new formalised crossing points or replacement equipment as part of the junction refurbishment. The Martins Heron improvements included replacement of the informal dropped kerb crossing points on the roundabout arms with formal toucan crossings on the A329 London Road West and Long Hill Road arms of the new signalised junction. The existing crossing points at the junctions of A329 London Road / Priory Road and A329 London Road / Fernbank Road were replaced with new equipment as part of the overall refurbishment. These improvements allowed for far safer movements for people accessing the walking / cycling routes.

3 Scheme Costs

3.1 BUDGET ESTIMATE

3.1.1 The project commenced in 2016 with an estimated cost of £3,800,000, comprising £2.9M funding from the TVBLEP and a £900K local contribution.

3.1.2 The projected cost breakdown over the life of the project was as follows

Table 3.1 – Projected annual budget requirements

Financial Year	Cost	TVBLEP	BFC
2016/2017	£200,000	£200,000	
2017/2018	£2,000,000	£2,000,000	
2018/2019	£1,600,000	£700,000	£900,000
Total	£3,800,000	£2,900,000	£900,000

3.2 PROJECT SPEND

3.2.1 Upon completion, the project came in just under £3.95M, with the minor overspend covered by BFC.

4 Delivered Scheme

4.1 MARTINS HERON ROUNDABOUT / SIGNALISED JUNCTION

Photo 1 – Martins Heron Roundabout looking east before improvements (image from Google Maps)



Photo 2 – Martins Heron Signalised Junction looking east after improvements (image from Google Maps)



Photo 3 – Martins Heron Roundabout looking west before improvements (image from Google Maps)



Photo 4 – Martins Heron Roundabout looking west after improvements (image from Google Maps)



4.2 *PRIORY ROAD / SWINLEY ROAD JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS*

Photo 5 – The view west towards A329 London Road / Priory Road / Swinley Road before improvements (image from Google Maps)



Photo 6 – The view west towards A329 London Road / Priory Road / Swinley Road after improvements (image from Google Maps)



4.3 LICENSED VICTUALLERS SCHOOL ENTRANCE

Photo 7 – Licensed Victuallers School entrance looking east before improvements
(image from Google Maps)



Photo 8 – Licensed Victuallers School entrance looking east after improvements (image from Google Maps)



4.4 LICENSED VICTUALLERS SCHOOL EXIT

Photo 9 – Licensed Victuallers School exit looking west before improvements (image from Google Maps)



Photo 10 – Licensed Victuallers School exit looking west after improvements (image from Google Maps)



4.5 A329 LONDON ROAD / FERNBANK ROAD JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS

Photo 11 – A329 London Road approaching Fernbank Road junction looking west before improvements (image from Google Maps)



Photo 12 – A329 London Road approaching Fernbank Road junction looking west after improvements (image from Google Maps)



5 Travel Demand

5.1 OBSERVED TURNING COUNTS

5.1.1 Junction turning counts were undertaken in March and October 2013 and were due to be repeated in March 2020 to illustrate the pre and post implementation effect of the corridor improvements. However, the beginning of the national lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic that month meant these were postponed until September 2021, so the positive effects of the improvements were also seen against a backdrop of travel demand that had been permanently changed by the events of the preceding 18 months.

5.1.2 Surveys were undertaken at the following junctions.

- Martins Heron roundabout junction (2013);
- Martins Heron signalised junction (2021);
- A329 London Road / Priory Road / Swinley Road; and
- A329 London Road / Fernbank Road.

5.1.3 All of the junctions were surveyed in the AM (07:00-10:00) and PM (16:00-19:00) peak periods with queue lengths observed at five minute intervals across all arms.

5.2 MARTINS HERON JUNCTION

5.2.1 Tables 5.1 and 5.2 below show the total number of vehicles passing through the junction during the busiest hours of the AM and PM peak periods for both 2013 and 2021.

Table 5.1: Total vehicles entering Martins Heron junction: AM Peak (08:15 – 09:15)

AM Peak	Total Vehicles
March 2013	2,524
Sept 2021	2,235
change from 2013	-11.5%

Table 5.2: Total vehicles entering Martins Heron junction: PM Peak (17:15 – 18:15 in 2013 and 17:00 – 18:00 in 2021)

PM Peak	Total Vehicles
March 2013	3,056
Sept 2021	2,556
change from 2013	-16.4%

5.2.2 This reduction in traffic over the eight year period is reflected across the borough and clearly demonstrates the impact that the pandemic has had on travel behaviour. A comparison of Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) recorded on an automatic traffic counter near this location also shows a 13% reduction overall between 2013 and 2021, so the numbers above clearly reflect this trend.

5.3 A329 LONDON ROAD / PRIORY ROAD / SWINLEY ROAD

5.3.1 Tables 5.3 and 5.4 below show the total number of vehicles passing through the junction during the busiest hours of the AM and PM peak periods for both 2013 and 2021.

Table 5.3: Total vehicles entering London Road / Priory Road / Swinley Road junction: AM Peak (07:30 – 08:30)

AM Peak	Total Vehicles
Oct 2013	2,488
Sept 2021	2,262
change from 2013	-9.1%

Table 5.4: Total vehicles entering London Road / Priory Road / Swinley Road junction: PM Peak (17:15 – 18:15 in 2013 and 17:00 – 18:00 in 2021)

PM Peak	Total Vehicles
March 2013	2,468
Sept 2021	2,350
change from 2013	-4.8%

5.3.2 The reduction in recorded demand since 2013 is lower here than at Martins Heron, however this indicates that the schemes introduced have improved capacity sufficiently to reduce the long queues that used to form from the London Road West approach, especially during the morning period.

5.4 *LICENSED VICTUALLERS SCHOOL*

- 5.4.1 Between the Swinley Road / Priory Road and Fernbank Road, the Licenced Victuallers School (LVS) is situated to the north of the A329 London Road. Prior to these works, access was by means of a left turn straight into the site from the single eastbound lane, and a westbound right turning lane of approximately 15m. In 2017 the eastbound approach was widened to include a 55m dedicated left turn only lane into the school, thus allowing through traffic to remain segregated from those queuing to enter the site.
- 5.4.2 The introduction of a new eastbound lane for traffic exiting the site towards the Fernbank Road signals also contributed significantly to the improved flow of through movements here, as London Road traffic no longer had to slow down to allow those exiting the school to merge. In addition, the banned right turn out of the site further to the east was enforced by the introduction of an island in the centre of the A329 carriageway.
- 5.4.3 Prior to the improvement being implemented, the eastbound approach to LVS was characterised by slow-moving traffic during the morning peak hour as vehicles queued into the site. During a morning peak hour survey here in January 2015, 190 out of 761 eastbound vehicle journeys turned left into the site (20%). In a survey a year earlier there had been 247 left turns. With little room for this traffic to move through the LVS site, this often caused traffic to back up towards the Swinley Road / Priory Road signals and beyond towards Bracknell.
- 5.4.4 So, against this backdrop of high demand for left turns into the school, it became clear to BFC that this one particular location was contributing to the overall delays being seen along the whole corridor. The improvement that was added significantly reduced these delays, although it wasn't until the introduction of the other measures that their combined benefits could be delivered.

5.5 *A329 LONDON ROAD / FERNBANK ROAD*

Tables 5.5 and 5.6 below show the total number of vehicles passing through the junction during the busiest hours of the AM and PM peak periods for both 2013 and 2021.

Table 5.5: Total vehicles entering London Road / Fernbank Road junction: AMPeak (07:30 – 08:30 in 2013 and 07:45 – 08:45 in 2021)

AM Peak	Total Vehicles
Oct 2013	2,233
Sept 2021	2,132
change from 2013	-4.5%

Table 5.6: Total vehicles entering London Road / Fernbank Road junction: PMPeak (17:00 – 18:00)

PM Peak	Total Vehicles
March 2013	2,180
Sept 2021	2,077
change from 2013	-4.7%

5.5.1 As with the Swinley Road / Priory Road junction to the west, the fall in traffic entering this junction between 2013 and 2021 is below the average reduction for the corridor. Again however, this reflects the improvement in capacity that has allowed more demand to pass through, where previously it had queued or moved at very slow speeds.

6 Journey Times

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 This section details the journey times now experienced on the eastern section of the A329 corridor following the introduction of these improvements and makes comparison between a recent survey (September 2021) and those first recorded before any of these schemes were introduced.

6.1.2 The journey time routes were as follows;

- The A329 from Eastern roundabout to Heatherwood roundabout, Ascot in the west to east direction
- The A329 from Heatherwood roundabout, Ascot to Eastern Roundabout in the east to west direction

6.1.3 Prior to any of the improvement schemes being added, this section of the A329 London Road corridor was characterised by lengthy queues of stationary or slow-moving traffic leading to delays, in particular eastbound during the morning peak period. Queues would regularly form from the signals at Swinley Road / Priory Road, leading to very slow-moving traffic stretching back through the Martins Heron roundabout towards the Eastern roundabout. Such queues occasionally allowed north-south movements to cross this junction with reduced delay as the entries were kept clear, however there was a clear compromise to safety when this occurred.

6.1.4 Journey times were originally recorded in 2013 as part of that year's refresh of the Bracknell Multi-Modal Transport Model. They were recorded between the hours of 07:00 – 10:00 for the AM peak period and 16:00 – 19:00 for the PM peak period, with the busiest 90 minute period being assessed in this exercise. These were used as a baseline, and although it had been intended to repeat them in early 2020 (a year after the completion of the schemes), the onset of the national lockdown because of the Covid-19 pandemic meant these were pushed back to September 2021. It was considered that this would provide a better comparison, as any post-Covid journey time patterns would have become established.

6.2 AM PEAK JOURNEY TIMES

6.2.1 Table 6.1 summarises the average journey times recorded over a 90 minute period (0745 – 0915) for the AM peaks. They also illustrate the percentage improvements between 2013 and 2021.

Table 6.1 – AM peak (0745 – 0915) Journey Time Comparison 2013 - 2021

AM Peak	Eastbound	Westbound
Sept 2013	12 min 54s	6 min 01s
Sept 2021	8 min 45s	5 min 57s
change from 2013	-32.2%	-1.1%

6.2.2 Table 6.1 shows the improvements to the corridor have significantly reduced the eastbound journey time when compared with those that were previously recorded. There was less of an issue with westbound delay, but even here we see a modest reduction.

6.3 PM PEAK JOURNEY TIMES

6.3.1 Table 6.2 summarises the average journey times recorded over a 90 minute period (1645 – 1815) for the PM peaks. It also illustrates the percentage changes in journey times between 2013 and 2021.

Table 6.2 – PM peak (1645 – 1815) Journey Time Comparison 2013 - 2021

PM Peak	Eastbound	Westbound
Sept 2013	8 min 26s	9 min 05s
Sept 2021	6 min 58s	7 min 17s
change from 2013	-17.4%	-19.8%

6.3.2 Table 6.2 shows the improvements have significantly reduced journey times in both directions during the busiest part of the PM peak period

6.3.3 The introduction of the new signalised junction at Martins Heron has had a positive impact on the overall performance of the corridor, in particular during the morning peakperiod as it has enabled eastbound traffic to be gated through each signal cycle. This has had the benefit of significantly reducing the eastbound queues / slow-moving trafficthat used to stretch back from the Swinley Road / Priory Road signals beyond the Martins Heron junction.

6.3.4 North-south movements through the junction were never significantly affected by queuing beyond that associated with normal peak hour demand, and whilst the signalshave introduced a small delay, this has resulted in a far safer operation as each movement now has its own dedicated stage.



7 Conclusions

7.1 SUMMARY

- 7.1.1 The programme of improvements for this stretch of the A329 corridor has delivered benefits that extend beyond any individual improvements in journey times.
- 7.1.2 For years this section of A329 London Road was characterised by long queues of stationary or slow-moving traffic, in particular on the eastbound carriageway towards Swinley Road / Priory Road and beyond approaching the Licenced Victuallers School.
- 7.1.3 It is only upon completion of the entire programme of improvements that the potential benefits first identified in the business case have been able to come to fruition.
- 7.1.4 This has been achieved using a combined approach of capacity improvements and adaptive signal technology that allows phasing to be changed and thus manage the movement of traffic along the corridor.
- 7.1.5 Below is an extract from the business case that sets out the challenges presented and the identified benefits that were being sought:

Table 7.1: Transport Challenges in LTP3 and Benefits of A329 Corridor Improvements

TRANSPORT CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED	DO THE IMPROVEMENTS HELP RESOLVE THIS?	DESCRIPTION
To reduce delays associated with traffic congestion and improve reliability of journey times	✔	The A329 Corridor Improvements will reduce congestion and delay
To maintain and improve, where feasible, the local transport network	✔	The A329 Corridor Improvements will contribute to an overall improvement in the local transport network
To reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport	✔	The A329 Corridor Improvements will reduce congestion and the level of greenhouse gas emissions
To encourage and promote accessibility by sustainable modes of transport	✔	Improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure will improve accessibility and encourage more people to travel sustainably
To protect and enhance the quality of natural resources including water, air quality and the natural environment	✔	The A329 Corridor Improvements will reduce congestion and the level of greenhouse gas emissions, resulting in improved air quality

To reduce casualties and improve safety on the local transport network		A number of new pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes will be installed, providing improved facilities for vulnerable road users and helping to reduce road casualties
To secure necessary transport infrastructure and services to support development		The improvements are required to provide vital vehicular access and pedestrian / cycle access into and out of the Borough

7.1.6 Taking these challenges in turn, the comparison in impacts between 2013 and 2021 demonstrates that this has been a success:

- *Reduce delays associated with traffic congestion* – in 2013 it took on average almost 13 minutes to travel eastbound along this stretch during the morning peak. Now the average is under nine minutes.
- *To maintain and improve, where feasible, the local transport network* – introducing MOVA-controlled signals along any route will allow peaks in traffic delay to be smoothed out quickly as the timings adjust to accommodate the increased demand.
- *To reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport* – whilst the full transition towards electric vehicles still has some way to go, any initiative that reduces queuing and thus idling engines will be helping to achieve this aim. The changes in queue lengths, in particular on A329 London Road eastbound support this.
- *To encourage and promote accessibility by sustainable modes of transport* – each of the improved junctions at Martins Heron, Swinley Road / Priory Road and Fernbank Road now incorporate dedicated pedestrian and cycle crossing phases. This is particularly effective in breaking down the barrier that A329 London Road presents to north-south movements by non-motorised modes and linking the residential areas of Bracknell to other areas via the National Cycle Network Route 422.
- *To protect and enhance the quality of natural resources including water, air quality and the natural environment* – as stated above, the removal of long queues of traffic helps to reduce the levels of harmful exhaust fumes.
- *To reduce casualties and improve safety on the local transport network* – the introduction of new or upgraded formal pedestrian and cycle crossing points at the signal junctions has provided a safer environment for these modes to cross

and has improved access to the wider pedestrian / cycle network. In addition, the removal of the roundabout at Martins Heron has significantly reduced the potential for road traffic accidents as all conflicting movements are now controlled by separate signal stages.

- *To secure necessary transport infrastructure and services to support development* – the A329 is a major arterial route in the borough that will continue to serve existing developments as well as those committed through the planning process. These improvements help to maintain that status and thus deter traffic demand from switching to inappropriate routes.

7.1.7 The other key change to emerge from the comparison of 2013 and 2021 is the overall fall in traffic volumes along the corridor. This is mirroring the patterns being seen across the borough in which travel behaviour is beginning to settle into a less car-dependent post-covid norm. What this has done is complement the improvements made to the corridor, resulting in reduced but better managed traffic flows and quicker journey times on what is a key strategic route in the borough.

End of report

Appendix 2

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

**Independent Assessment Summary Report: A329 Corridor Improvements /
Martins Heron Roundabout**

One Year Impact Report

**A Report by Hatch
October 2021**

Independent Assessment

- i. This technical note provides an independent assessment of the one-year Impact Report submitted by Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) in relation to the A329 Corridor Improvements / Martins Heron roundabout project.
- ii. The scheme received £2.9 million funding through the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) Local Growth Fund deal. As part of the on-going assurance process, TVB LEP requires all funded schemes to produce one-year and five-year post-implementation impact reports to demonstrate how each scheme has performed against expectations.

Process

- iii. The one and five-year impact reports are expected to assess the following elements of the scheme:
 - a. did it get built?
 - b. was it to plan?
 - c. was it on time?
 - d. was it to budget?
 - e. is it working ok?
 - f. what impact has it had?
 - g. any learning points?
- iv. Hatch have applied these criteria, but also sought to use the process as positive influence to identify specific ways in which project scheme design or delivery could be enhanced to enhance future value of this scheme or other future LEP funded schemes.

Scheme Summary

- v. Bracknell Forest Council received £2.9m from the TVB LEP Local Growth Fund as part of an overall estimated scheme cost of £3,800,000. TVB LEP's contribution to the scheme accounted for 76% of all estimated scheme costs.
- vi. The A329 Corridor runs from Coppid Beech Roundabout, in the adjacent borough of Wokingham, through central Bracknell and out towards the Heatherwood Roundabout in Ascot which is in the Royal Borough of

Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The corridor forms part of the original inner ring road developed in the post-war years and the main capacity constraints today are the junctions where radial and orbital routes intersect.

- vii. This specific project focussed on the Martins Heron roundabout (the intersection of A329 London Road / New Forest Road / Long Hill Road) to the east of Bracknell and included associated junction improvements and minor alterations to the A329 London Road corridor. This particular section of the corridor had been identified for improvement, as it had become characterised by poor journey times and peak hour traffic queuing in both directions.
- viii. The planned work consisted of the following elements:
 - Replacement of Martins Heron Roundabout with a fully signalised junction;
 - Improvements to the existing signal junction at A329 London Road / Swinley Road / Priory Road including upgrading the signal equipment and controller. This improvement also included the introduction of MOVA to control the signals at the junction.
 - Improvements to the existing signal junction at A329 London Road / Fernbank Road, including widening of the westbound approach and eastbound exit on A329 London Road and the introduction of MOVA.
 - Each junction included pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities to link to the National Cycle Route 422, which runs along the northern side of A329 London Road.
- ix. The scheme also included modifications to the entrance and exit of Licensed Victuallers School to the east of the Swinley Road / Priory Road signals comprising of the following:
 - Introduction of a dedicated entry lane to remove queuing eastbound traffic from A329 London Road;
 - Introduction of an island to enforce the banned right turn movement out of the site on to A329 London Road;
 - Extension of the nearside eastbound lane from the school exit to the A329 London Road / Fernbank Road junction to minimise disruption to through traffic on the A329.

- x. It is important to note that the planned improvements were part of a much wider strategic programme to improve access between the M3 and M4 via the A322, A329 and A329M to tackle congestion and support economic growth objectives for the region.
- xi. The Full Business Case (FBC) outlined how the performance of the scheme would be assessed against the project objectives to demonstrate the value for money for the funding of the scheme. These objectives related to changes in traffic flows, reductions in journey times and variability of travel times.
- xii. To achieve this, post scheme-opening traffic surveys were proposed to be undertaken on the A329 to establish the change in traffic movement patterns and whether improvements to journey times have occurred as anticipated in the modelling. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, the proposed surveys for March 2020 were postponed. The first surveys were undertaken in September 2021 and the results presented in BFC's one-year evaluation report which was produced in October 2021.

Review Findings

General Observations

- xiii. The planned works are reported to be completed on time and over a 22-month construction period across two phases. There was a gap between Phases 1 and 2 of four months. The gap between phases was a sensible step coinciding within the opening of the new town centre and its first Christmas when traffic volumes were likely to be greater than usual.
 - Phase 1 was undertaken between April 2017 and September 2017 and included improved exit and entry lanes from the Licensed Victuallers School, as well as widening of the A329 London Road.
 - Phase 2 began in early January 2018 after a 4-month gap and all works were completed by February 2021. This phase included:
 - London Road/ Martins Heron junction traffic signalisation – this was the major element in this phase with a 13-month construction period.
 - Improvements to the London Road / Priory Road traffic signals

- Improvements to the London Road / Fernbank Road traffic signals
 - Pedestrian / Cycle Crossing facilities
- xiv. The scheme was delivered for a final cost of £3.95m. This represented a minor overspend of £150,000 (3.9%) compared to the estimated cost of £3.8m. The Council's report does not cover what the overspend was for. However, this was met by BFC and no further ask was made on the TVB LEP over and above the agreed £2.9m funding. This was in line with the statement within FBC if such an overrun should arise. While the cost estimates within the FBC included appropriate contingency, the FBC's commercial case was clear that unforeseen risks around utilities and highways constraints could arise.
- xv. The BFC one-year report includes helpful visual evidence of the pre-scheme locations and post-scheme implementation of the improvements. These clearly bring to life how the project funding has made enhancements and changes to the A329 corridor in the targeted junctions. In particular, the signalised junction which has replaced the roundabout, as well as the new access and departure arrangements and additional lane capacity installed to reduce delays linked to the school.
- xvi. The report provides useful evidence on travel demand. It does this through undertaking a survey of vehicle counts at the four identified junctions at AM and PM peak periods. The counts were undertaken in September 2021 and are compared to a March 2013 baseline.
- xvii. Given the pandemic, the overarching key message is that the A329 corridor and these specific junction improvements are handling significantly fewer vehicles. BFC's report acknowledges this position, and that the pandemic has brought fundamental and potentially permanent change to travel behaviours. For example, the new signalised Martins Heron junction saw a 11.5% AM and a 16.4% PM reduction in vehicle numbers between 2013 and 2021 (c.290-500 fewer vehicles). A separate AADT counter near to this junction on the corridor also recorded a 13% reduction.
- xviii. The improved junctions at London Road/Priory Road/Swinley Road and London Road/Fernbank Road also saw fewer vehicles recorded in 2021 compared to 2013. For example, AM peaks were down by 9.1% and 4.5% respectively.

- xix. The BFC report highlights how improved capacity at these junctions is playing a role in why falls in demand may be smaller in scale. While this could be part of the answer, it would also be interesting to test in future reports if this could potentially relate to more localised users still making regular and shorter journeys via these junctions, as opposed to ‘through’ or commuter traffic flows on the main A329 Martins Heron junction. The larger fall in demand on this junction is likely to be impacted by factors such as working from home increasingly still an option for office-based workers at the time of the survey.
- xx. The report also assesses latest journey times on the corridor, with a focus on eastbound and westbound timings at AM and PM periods. Prior to any improvements, the report notes how the A329 corridor was characterised by lengthy queues of stationary and slow-moving traffic leading to delays – particularly eastbound in the AM peak period. BFC concluded:
- The latest survey showed that eastbound AM journey times along the corridor had fallen significantly from an average of nearly 13 minutes to just under 9 minutes (32% fall in journey time). Interestingly, westbound journey times only fell by four seconds.
 - Analysis of PM peak journeys show that journey times fell by nearly 20% westbound (nearly 2 minutes) and 17% eastbound (1.5 minutes). BFC concluded that the introduction of the improvements had significantly improved journey times in both directions during the PM peak period.
- xxi. BFC’s overall conclusion on journey times along the corridor was that the improvements and, in particular the Martins Heron junction changes, have had a positive impact on the overall performance of the corridor, specifically in the AM peak period for eastbound traffic. The improvements ensured traffic became gated between each signal cycle thus reducing queuing and slow-moving traffic which stretched back to other junctions.
- xxii. The BFC report included a conclusion section reflecting on the transport challenges identified within the LTP3 for the transport network and how they consider the benefits arising from the A329 improvements have contributed towards tackling these challenges. As well as quantified changes to assess positive changes in journey times and delays, BFC also

identify observed material changes and also draw qualitative assessments of change to address the identified challenges. For example:

- maintaining and improving the transport network;
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport through less queuing/idling;
- promoting sustainable transport through new cycling and pedestrian crossings;
- improving safety for car, pedestrian and cycle users; and
- creating new infrastructure which supports economic growth and development objectives.

xxiii. Undertaking a one-year impact report is particularly challenging against a backdrop of such fundamental user change. However, BFC see this reduction in demand as a positive outcome which in addition to the proposed changes has led to a better managed traffic flows and quicker journey times for corridor users.

Conclusions

xxiv. The BFC one-year impact report is a well-constructed and balanced document, making good use of the available evidence at this stage. In particular, new survey counts have been undertaken in September 2021 to assess levels of demand along the corridor since the improvements were implemented compared to 2013, as well as analysis of journey times along the corridor. The report also provides very helpful photographs of the before and after context for the scheme which brings to life the changes which have been implemented as a result of TVB LEP and BFC investment in the corridor.

xxv. While the report outlines how the scheme has addressed the multiple challenges identified along the corridor, particularly the reduction in delays associated with traffic congestion at peak times, access and delays linked to the school, and implementation of enhanced adaptive signal technology, these infrastructure changes have been measured and analysed at a time of significant and potentially permanent user change linked to the pandemic.

xxvi. While BFC recognises that undertaking a one-year impact report is particularly challenging against a backdrop of such fundamental user change, they see this reduction in demand as a positive outcome which in

addition to the proposed changes has led to a better managed traffic flows and quicker journey times for corridor users. While this is a positive initial outcome from the project, a key test will be how the improvements in journey time savings and other benefits seen thus far stand up to increasing traffic volumes if traffic demand changes increase. This will only be able to be tested in subsequent years from on-going monitoring annual exercises or at the five-year review.

xxvii. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:

- While the impact report provides a positive position based upon the latest available data, given the timing of the project and the recent surveys, further understanding of the impact of the project on reducing delays and congestion along the corridor should be undertaken in subsequent years.
- Follow-on counts/surveys in future years can be undertaken, as potentially, traffic demand gradually increases, as the implications of lockdowns and the evolution of working practices emerge. This approach to future monitoring would provide greater assurance on project impacts and outcomes to TVLEP and BFC.
- The scheme also focussed on addressing a number of challenges along the corridor beyond just journey times and congestion (e.g. cycling and pedestrian needs, environmental improvements, safety etc). Going beyond qualitative and inferred assessments of these types of observed changes, future monitoring and evaluation could also consider tracking/counting different corridor users, air quality and road safety data along the corridor compared to pre-investment.
- Future monitoring reports may also want to consider the inclusion/use of any insights from the Licensed Victuallers School (e.g. the Principal or governing body) as to the potential positive impacts on school users accessing and existing the school, as well as on the schools operational needs.
- Providing further clarity on what caused the £150,000 overspend covered by BFC. It will be helpful for similar projects to consider what types of challenges are faced in delivering infrastructure projects of this nature and estimating scheme costs.

- A helpful leaning point for all monitoring reports is to include key maps and locations of the scheme intervention locations and, where possible, visual evidence to help contextualise the pre-scheme investment position and the post-investment position.

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021

CONTACT OFFICER: TIM WHEADON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

Item 8: 2.21 Slough: Langley Station Access – One Year Evaluation Report

Purpose of Report

1. At your meeting in March 2017, you approved guidance for the preparation of one- and five-year-on impact reports for BLTB funded local transport schemes.
2. Per reports received at the March and July 2021 BLTB meetings, it was agreed that due to the Covid pandemic, the pending one-year impact reports would be temporarily suspended until a sufficient resumption of normal, or near normal, traffic movements resumed. It has been agreed by the Berkshire Transport Officers that we are probably now at this point, enabling reports to be drawn up and submitted.
3. This report introduces the one-year impact report for scheme 2.21 Slough: Langley Station Access.

Recommendation

4. You are recommended to note the reports from the scheme promoter and the independent assessor.

Other Implications

Financial

5. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Risk Management

6. The government requires all LEPs to have Assurance Frameworks which set out governance arrangements and financial procedures. One of the specific requirements for transport schemes is to require scheme promoters to submit impact reports one- and five-years post implementation.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

7. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of the Assurance Framework.

Supporting Information

8. Slough Borough Council received £1.5m in LGF towards the cost of this £5.26m scheme (including £3.5m from Network Rail).
9. The one-year on impact report is attached at Appendix 1; and the independent assessor's report is attached at Appendix 2.

Conclusion

10. The Independent Assessor concludes the SBC one-year impact report is a well-constructed and balanced document, making good use of the available evidence at this stage. Whilst the agreed delay in producing this report was agreed with TVB LEP and Berkshire Local Transport Body no quantitative evidence or survey data was provided at this stage.
11. The report also provides very helpful photographs of the before and after context for the scheme which brings to life the changes which have been implemented because of TVB LEP and SBC investment. While the report helpfully outlines how the scheme has addressed the multiple issues and challenges surrounding safety and access to Langley station, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.
12. SBC recognises that undertaking a one-year impact report is too soon to provide a realistic assessment of the actual outcomes of the scheme. The Council expects to be able to provide a much more detailed review of the scheme at the five-year evaluation report milestone.
13. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:
 - While the report provides a positive indication of the scheme improving the safety and accessibility to Langley Station, providing quantitative data for the five-year report will be important to evaluate the impact and outcomes of the scheme. Data includes measuring the uptake in public transport in the area, walking and cycling counts and usage numbers of the cycle docking station in Alderbury Road. This approach to future monitoring would provide greater assurance on project impacts and outcomes to TVLEP and SBC.
 - The scheme focussed on addressing a number of challenges to do with accessibility and safety to Langley Station. Going beyond qualitative and inferred assessments of these types of observed changes, future monitoring and evaluation could also consider local survey data, air quality and road safety data along the corridor compared to pre-investment.
 - For future monitoring reports, providing clarity on whether the revised start date of the scheme was on time. It will be helpful to see if the revised timeframe for a project of this nature was met.
 - For future monitoring reports, provide a breakdown of costs to show that the estimated costs and costs incurred from the scheme align and show that the scheme was delivered on budget.
 - For future monitoring reports, the report should include key maps and locations of the scheme interventions and, where possible, visual evidence to help contextualise the pre-scheme investment position and the post-investment position
14. There is no further action required.

Background Papers: None.

Slough: Langley Station Access

Berkshire Local Transport Body (BLTB)

One Year On Evaluation report

Bill Hicks

October 2021



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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

The original core scheme was designed to increase connectivity and accessibility within Langley and across the borough, as well as to improve links with neighbouring areas, through the development of facilities and infrastructure for the promotion of active travel, and in support of public transport patronage.

A central element of the scheme was to improve accessibility, and in particular to promote active travel links to the station, which would lead to more sustainable travel. The public realm / access enhancements facilitated a more sustainable approach to travel. In addition to travel related concerns and modal shift, the scheme at this site also sought to address social inclusion, wellbeing, safety, and environmental requirements. The scheme was also expected to deliver growth related benefits, as well as social and environmental benefits, and generally to make the location more vibrant and attractive.

The project scope for the SBC project was subsequently amended at the detailed design stage to include more extensive highway improvement changes in Station Road, the Harrow Market roundabout and the junction with Waterside Drive. This comprised further measures to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as facilitating traffic improvements which became an additional priority due to the anticipated imminent closure of Hollow Hill Lane. Without any mitigation measures, this closure was expected to lead to severe traffic congestion in Langley. The focus therefore shifted to some extent, however the amended / combined scheme remained part of a much larger vision for the town, which is dedicated to the reduction of travel by private car, and increased use of public transport, cycling and walking.

The Council managed scheme ran alongside station re-development which came under the responsibility of Crossrail and Network Rail (NR). This element of the overall project for Langley Station is essentially not covered within this evaluation, though some further references will be made where directly relevant.

1.2. Location

Slough borough is characterised as a dense urban environment bounded by green belt, situated in the east of Berkshire and in the Thames Valley Berkshire sub-region. Langley is approximately two miles east of central Slough. Whilst primarily residential, Langley also includes light industrial, commercial, retail and leisure use. Key sites within Langley include the Langley Hall Primary Academy & Langley College, Langley Park Memorial Recreation Ground, Langley Business Centre & Waterside Drive Business Park, Harrow Market and Langley Rail Station (which is on the Great Western Main Line to London Paddington and which will soon be on Crossrail, providing connectivity into London).

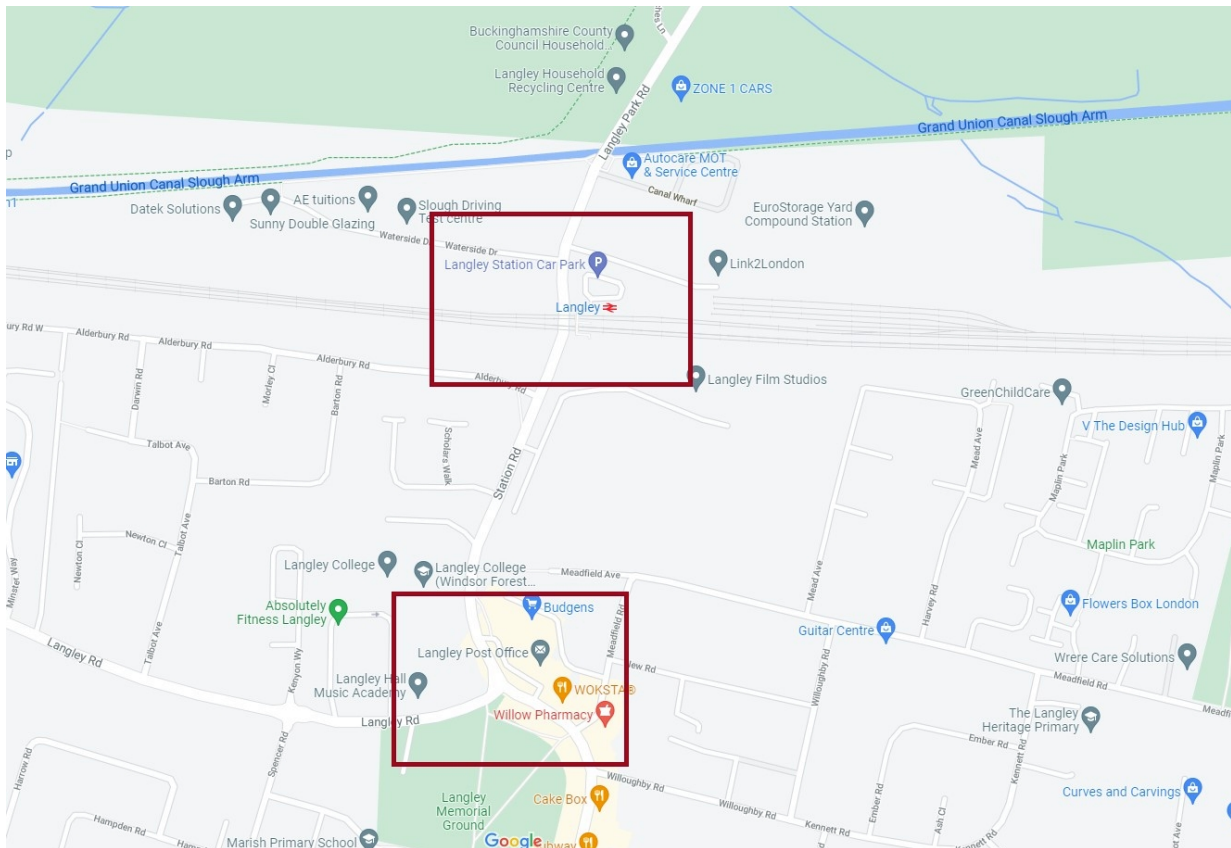
Langley is one of three rail stations in the borough, along with Burnham and Slough. The area around Langley Station is a mixture of residential and light industrial land use.

Langley station is served by Great Western Railway mainline trains, but frequency is limited and the fastest journey time to Paddington is approximately 30 minutes. Services are expected to increase in frequency when Crossrail is fully operational.

Station Road is a north/south link running from Langley Station to the Harrow Marker junction (previously a roundabout) in the heart of Langley Village. This connects with Langley Road, to the west, and High Street (Langley) which ultimately connects with the A4/London Road.



Langley Station, via Station Road (above)



Map of Langley showing the locations of the main interventions delivered in the scheme

1.3. Historic Problems

1.3.1. Accessibility and Mobility

Accessibility around the station has historically not been conducive to more socially inclusive and environmentally focused modes of travel. Linked to this, the station approach area was not previously helpful overall to people with reduced mobility. The scheme was therefore designed to address both aspects; to improve access to the station, improve accessibility at the location, and specifically to encourage walking and cycling as well as public transport. In addition, to increase accessibility in its widest sense and to encourage the further uptake of rail travel, a new car park was originally planned, although this element was ultimately not pursued.

1.3.2. Public Image

The public realm area around the station was previously generally considered to be not particularly attractive and hence did not encourage people to travel by public transport or by active travel modes. This was addressed throughout the scheme, including the layout and landscaping.

1.3.3. Congestion

The highway network in this area is subject to high volumes of traffic and there have been problems with congestion at peak times. Localised congestion can be attributed to both the relatively high car use across the borough, especially for short journeys, and the proximity to motorways links. Increased levels of congestion were expected to arise from the proposed closure of Hollow hill Lane by Network Rail. The Langley Station Access Improvement scheme was therefore designed and subsequently amended to include measures to relieve localised congestion through traffic management, alongside pedestrian and cycling access to and around the station.

1.4. Objectives and outcomes

The overall objectives of the SBC scheme included measures to increase access to Langley Station with enhanced infrastructure to promote active travel, and to make the adjacent public realm areas more attractive. The scheme was also design to improve traffic congestion levels and to improve the location as an eastern point of access to the wider borough, as well as enhancing cross-boundary connectivity with adjacent areas.

The key / specific objectives stated in the business case were as follows:

Objective
1. Improve pedestrian access to Langley station
2. Improve access for cyclists to Langley station
3. Provide reconfigured parking arrangements and drop off facility for Langley Station
4. Improve the perception of safety and security at and around Langley Station

The Highways and Transport specific outcomes included 400m of road resurfacing and 400m of new cycle ways. More widely, the growth outcomes anticipated as a result of this scheme were focused on the expected number of new housing units (500 new units).

This report evaluates the impacts of the project with reference to the overall and specific, stated objectives.

1.5. Evaluation Period / timetable for this review

This is the formal, one-year-on evaluation review. The scheme was completed in September 2019, however, due to the impacts of COVID-19, notably on traffic levels across the network, it was agreed with the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and the Berkshire Local Transport Body that this review would be delayed until all the COVID restrictions had been lifted.

2. Funding

The majority of the funding for this scheme came from the LEP Local Growth Deal. Additional funding was provided by the Council from S106 contributions and capital funds. The full figures are shown in the tables below:

Source of funding	Total
LEP Local Growth Deal	£1,500,000
<i>Local contributions:</i>	
- Section 106 agreements	£50,000
- Council Capital funds	£210,000
Total Scheme Cost	£1,760,000

An additional £3.5m was identified as funding for wider improvements at the station, proposed by and under the control of Network Rail. The cost and expenditure for this element have not been reviewed in this report.

3. Scheme details

The original core scheme included a range of measures design to improve accessibility to the station, including shared use areas for pedestrians and cyclists, improvement cycling facilities both within and around the station, improved landscaping in the public realm area, and

redevelopment of the car park on Network Rail land. Ultimately, the car park element was removed from the plans on the grounds that it would deliver no nett benefit in parking provision and overall outcomes.

3.1. Design elements

The final SBC scheme included the following main infrastructure changes:

Improved cycle parking facilities within and around the station:

- Introduction of a Cycle Hire Slough docking station within grassed area just north of Alderbury Road.

Improvement of cycling facilities on-street in the vicinity of the station, including:

- Provision of a zebra crossing on Station Road adjacent to Alderbury Road;
- Introduction of shared use areas on Station Road and the junction with Alderbury Road; and
- Introduction of Advance Stop Line (ASLs) on the Waterside Drive arm of the Waterside Drive / Station Road junction.

Improved pedestrian facilities to and from the station, both from the north and the south approaches:

- Provision of a new, signalised, diagonal Toucan crossing at Station Road/ Waterside Drive junction;
- Provision of a new, signalised, Toucan crossing across the Access Road, at Station Road/ Waterside Drive junction;
- Provision of a new zebra crossing facility on Station Road adjacent to Alderbury Road; and

- Provision of improved non-signalised pedestrian facilities at the Waterside Drive / Station Road junction to the north of the railway bridge.
- Provision of a new traffic island on Waterside Drive, as an uncontrolled crossing point;

Conversion of the Harrow Market roundabout into a signalised junction

Harrow Market connects the approaches to Langley Village from Station Road (to the north), Langley Road (to the west) and High Street, Langley (to the south). This ultimately became the first stage of the overall mitigation measures on the network in preparation for the anticipated closure of Hollow Hill Lane by network Rail. Hence, better traffic flow through Langley went hand in hand with access to the station, and safer, more efficient travel to the station for all road users, including cyclists and pedestrians.

The main elements left out of the final design were the reconfiguration of station car park including a new drop-off (kiss-and-ride) area in the station forecourt.

Crossrail Scheme

Along the SBC managed scheme, Crossrail/Network Rail proposed a scheme including elements undertaken as part of their On-Station Improvement Programme Step Free Access programme.

Nb: This wider scheme and its direct impacts have not been evaluated in this report, though they have relevance to the combined effect of the respective improvement schemes.

4. Project Management

4.1. Key dates

Construction started on site in March 2018.

The work was completed in September 2019.

4.2. Construction team

The main extent of the construction work was carried out by Amey, the Council's term maintenance contractor, with the final construction tasks completed by SBC's Direct Service Organisation (DSO), who took over from Amey as the main contractors.

An excellent health and safety record was maintained for the duration of the project, with no serious incidents on site during the project.

4.3. Programme variations

The commencement of the construction period was delayed to a certain extent due to concerns about the value of re-developing the car park at the station. Additional modelling was carried out which showed that there would be no nett benefits as a result of this specific element of the proposal. Furthermore, there was increasing awareness and concern about the expected closure of Hollow Hill Lane. As a result, with approval from the Local Enterprise Partnership, the plans were redeveloped to broaden the scope of the highway improvements, to incorporate further improves to station access and also benefit in terms of traffic movements.

The original station access work had been due to be completed within 2018. Following the revised scope for the scheme, the end date for full completion was revised to September 2019. Once the detailed designs were revised, there were no significant delays at the construction stage.

4.4. Costs and financial control

The SBC elements of the project were completed on budget, with a total expenditure of £1,760,000. This included the original station access features as well as the revisions to the designs for the junction improvements which were accommodated within the eventual overall scheme.

The actual costs of the related Network Rail element of the project have not been made available to the Council.

5. Review and evaluation of the outcomes

5.1. Overall outcome

The scheme was completed satisfactorily, to a high technical standard. Due to the revised scope of the scheme, the construction work took somewhat longer than had originally been anticipated. However, the final scheme delivered provided additional improvements, which further enhanced the accessibility features and also served as the first phase of a more extensive highway improvement programme. All of this was achieved within the budget for the original scheme proposal.

The infrastructure across the site has provided better, safer controlled crossing points for both cyclists and pedestrians, including both new zebra crossings and signalisation phases at key junctions. These have led to an improvement in road safety, both actual and perceived. The crossings have been backed up by refreshed cycle lane markings and all necessary signage.

Limited quantitative data has been available for this evaluation exercise. In this case, modal shift was not a specific objective in the business case, though this is always an important high level aspiration and increasingly a necessity in terms of sustainability. However, it is challenging at this stage to confidently state the level of modal shift from private car to active travel and public transport achieved by this scheme. This level of assessment is particularly challenging at the time of writing this report, given the recent impacts of the COVID-19 situation and the likelihood of ongoing changes to behavioural patterns.

The Langley Station Access scheme has delivered an attractive, safe, more efficient and better connected area of public realm to facilitate access to the station. This includes infrastructure designed to meet the needs of all road users, many of whom engage in onward travel via rail.

The scheme specifically includes enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, notably for those who might otherwise struggle to access the station. Active travel improvements also contribute to linked journeys and hence serve to promote the uptake of public transport, in this case mainly by rail travel. The wider, economic imperatives have also been addressed with the measures designed to deliver better traffic management.

The redesign of the Harrow Market roundabout to a signalised junction, and the improvements to the junctions with Alderbury Road and Waterside Drive have also contributed to the improvement in traffic flow. However, further changes are required to build on these

improvements, and these are currently being delivered in an extended scheme (on site at the time of writing).

Overall, through a combination of measures, the station approach is now more accessible to all road users, and the measures implemented have increased both accessibility and mobility. The full benefits (notably modal shift) will only be fully realised, though, when backed up by ongoing, long-term behavioural changes. In support of active travel and public transport, especially, the Council is increasingly committed to promoting behavioural change. Most notably this is through extensive engagement and travel planning, carried out by the Access team, which works closely with schools, businesses and other members of the community, learning about their travel experiences and habits and making appropriate recommendations on all aspects of travel. All of this work is essential in order to build upon the opportunities, and the actual success, provided by infrastructure measures including this Langley Station Access scheme.

Railway station project and the combined impacts

The outcomes of the improvements within the station have not been assessed in this report, since these come under the responsibility and management of the Crossrail / Network Rail team.

5.2. Specific objectives of the Station Access scheme

Objective
1. Improve pedestrian access to Langley station
2. Improve access for cyclists to Langley station
3. Provide reconfigured parking arrangements and drop off facility for Langley Station
4. Improve the perception of safety and security at and around Langley Station

5.3. Improve pedestrian access to Langley Station

A major element of the scheme was the promotion of walking and cycling, with the specific objective of improving access to the station. Most notably, this included new or amended road crossings, in Station Road and also in Alderbury Road and Waterside Drive.

This crossing point enhancements have also created safer passage for pedestrians, as well as more efficient routes, particularly for students, children and other vulnerable road users. The new layout of the various junctions and overall approach to the station have enhanced the area of public realm in the vicinity, making it generally more amenable and attractive, as well as accessible.



Junction of Station Road and Waterside Drive

The improvements delivered at this location include a re-configured signalised crossing, with a new pedestrian phase, plus tactile paving, resurfaced footway, and new signage indicating shared pedestrian/cyclist usage permitted.



New crossing island in Waterside Drive

5.4. Improve access for cyclists to Langley station

To further promote cycling, a new cycle docking station was installed on the verge at the junction with Station Road and Alderbury Road. This is part of the borough wide cycle hire scheme. The advisory cycle lane on Langley Road has been refreshed. Overall, the scheme design has made the area in front of the station safer and easier to navigate. For cyclists, especially, there is also now a better link with cycle routes in the surrounding network.

At the time of riding, a review of cycle hire usage is being undertaken. The early indications are that cycle hire numbers have declined to a certain extent in recent times. This is likely to be due in part to the impacts of COVID-19, and renewed uptake of hire bikes is anticipated. There has, however, been considerable uptake in the use of e-Scooters, currently on trial across the borough. Again, more information has been requested with specific reference to Langley, and this will be provided at the earliest opportunity.



New cycle docking station in Alderbury Road

Active Travel – connectivity

The improvements to accessibility by active travel have positive impacts on the uptake of public transport. The measures introduced in the scheme promote rail travel for all purposes, but especially commuting, enhancing connectivity, the trading estate and the town centre. This helps to create or take advantage of existing commercial opportunities, but in a more socially inclusive way and without the damaging impacts that would otherwise arise from travel by private, motorised means. This provides better connectivity for travellers making multi-modal journeys, again in a safe and easily accessible way.

5.5. Reconfigured parking arrangements and drop off facility for Langley Station

Noting the removal of the redevelopment of the car park at the station from the designs, the scheme as delivered does not formally increase parking capacity. However, the potential for on-street pay-and-display bays on Waterside Drive has been unlocked. These bays were previously underused and continue to be an option to increase access to the station via car travel. Although travel by private car is generally not considered *sustainable*, it would not be realistic to exclude this mode of travel from the Langley station area (or indeed across the borough), given the need for growth and economic sustainability.

5.6. Improve perception of safety / security at and around Langley Station

The objective to improve safety and perceptions of safety relates most closely to the related Rail managed scheme at the station itself, rather than the SBC access and public realm scheme. Levels of reported crime at Langley Station and its car park are currently not available. However, the objective to reduce crime levels is more closely related to the internal station improvements, managed by Network Rail and the Crossrail team, though some studies suggest that only a marginal change may result from the type of measures implemented within the station. Hence, crime levels are not considered to be an appropriate evaluation metric for the SBC scheme.

In terms of perception of safety in the vicinity of the station, the SBC development of the station access scheme has improved the location. Although somewhat subjective, this has created a more welcoming environment, and one which appears to be safer as well as more attractive and better designed. It is reasonable, therefore, to consider that the scheme has improved the perception of safety. To validate this, it will be necessary to conduct extensive public engagement, and to seek their views and perceptions directly.

5.7. Road Safety

Although not considered a high risk site, the Council has provided increased road safety measures within the scheme designs. This includes the introduction of two new zebra crossings in Station Road, near to the entrance to Langley College and at the junction with Alderbury Road, also a number of new crossing islands at various locations.

In addition, the scheme includes new pedestrian crossing phases at the signalised junction of Station Road and Waterside Drive, as well as the installation of tactile paving at the crossing points. Furthermore, resurfacing of the footways has improved the quality of surface for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the site.



New zebra crossing point in Station Road near to the junction with Alderbury Road



New crossing island in Station Road, approaching Harrow Market

Nb a full accident assessment was not provided in the original business case. However, the lowering of the speed limit (to 20mph in the area around the station, the footway and cycleway improvements and the increased number of formal pedestrian crossings are all expected to result in an improved level of safety, particularly for vulnerable road users. Overall it is expected that the impact of the scheme on safety will be slightly positive. The location will continue to be monitored and any appropriate action will be taken.

5.8. Additional measures resulting from the change in scope

The redesign of the Harrow Market roundabout, along with the junction improvements at Waterside Drive were successfully completed.

In the light of the ongoing traffic management relating to the High Street (Langley) highway widening, the current state of the road network does not allow for meaningful assessment of the traffic related impacts of the additional highway improvements referred to above.

However, from network management overviews carried out prior to the commencement of the scheme extension, the new junction layouts are considered to be operating well.

A comprehensive assessment of the impacts of the full Langley scheme will be carried out at the appropriate intervals following completion of all outstanding elements.



The old roundabout at Harrow Market, shortly before being replaced



Approaching the new signalised junction at Harrow Market, from Langley Road

6. Growth related outcomes

6.1. Growth Forecast and Actuals

In terms of growth, the predicted outcomes of the project included new housing units, along with two highways outputs.

Predicted Outcomes	Planned	Actual (to September 2021)
New housing units	500	TBA
Transport and Highways Outputs		
Total length of resurfaced roads	400m	400m
Total length of new cycle ways	400m	400m

The proposed Transport and Highways measures have been delivered as planned.

The actual new housing number to date is not yet known. This is due in part to the ongoing development of the highway network in this location, as part of the overall plans to mitigate the increased levels of traffic in response to the closure of Hollow Hill Lane by Network Rail in the next few years. The date for this closure has not yet been determined.

Furthermore, as stated in the business case, *“Objectives relating to economic growth through investment in business and housing will be difficult to measure in the short-term, and cannot be directly attributable to this scheme in particular. However, longer term evaluation will seek to monitor economic, employment and housing growth.”*

7. Further / Ongoing Monitoring recommended

Cycle hire scheme / docking station usage

The number of passengers accessing the station will continue to be measured and compared against forecast background growth to determine whether the accessibility improvements have been as beneficial as anticipated.

Community Safety

Subject to availability, studies of police crime numbers for the area are required in order to gain a greater understanding of the wider impacts of the introduction of the scheme.

Overall, the Council is committed to ongoing studies to determine the actual figures for the combined impacts of all completed LEP funded schemes. Ongoing monitoring will be necessary, along with an agreed formula to come up with the most relevant and most accurate figures for these outcomes.

As a general rule, the Council also considers that a one year period is too soon to provide a realistic assessment of actual outcomes of this type. The five year evaluation report is expected to produce a much more helpful review of actual growth.

Furthermore, in this case in particular, due to the extension to the Langley scheme, currently ongoing (the Langley Highway Improvement scheme), the expected outcomes and evaluation periods are all likely to require revision.

8. Links to wider Growth Fund projects and Network activity

The Langley Station Access / Public Realm scheme is part of a wide-ranging programme of schemes being delivered by Slough Borough Council. This programme is a collective response to the diverse challenges and opportunities, including the need for improved traffic management, promotion of public transport, increased levels of active travel, improved air quality and related environmental requirements, and so forth.

The Langley Station Access scheme is an important contribution to the promotion of rail travel, and to intermodal journeys on the network.

However, the high level of commuting across the borough and the various needs of residents inevitably mean that travel by private car remains a necessity for many at present. Hence the original Langley scheme is part of an overall package of measures.

In developing an integrated, sustainable transport solution, the Langley scheme connects mostly closely with the SMaRT projects, phases 1 and 2, which promote public transport patronage. Phase two is currently in construction, with the MRT element due to be completed by March 2022. Phase one provided MRT infrastructure on the A4/London Road (tangential to High Street, Langley). Phase two extends the infrastructure towards Heathrow Airport, and also includes highway improvements to the Sutton Lane gyratory.

In addition, an experimental bus lane scheme has been in progress on the A4, between Uxbridge roundabout and the west of the borough, since the summer of 2020. This was an emergency response to the Government's call for a scheme to ensure the post-COVID recovery period is not car led.

Hence, the level of connectivity is becoming more comprehensive for both motorists and bus users. Junction re-designs are also making better provision for cyclists and pedestrians.

In terms of active travel, the cycle dock station in the public realm area at Langley station is one of many across the borough. Further cycling and walking schemes are expected to be developed in Slough, and these will draw on the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

All of these schemes and potential schemes form part of an overall plan to create a more economically active and environmentally and socially inclusive town. This sustainable approach is underpinned by a safer, more resilient, more accessible transport network, with reduced congestion, better air quality, and more attractive alternatives for business, workers and residents.

9. Langley Highway Improvements – scheme extension

The subsequent scheme, currently in progress in Langley, is an extension to the highway improvement measures that were ultimately incorporated into the original Langley Station Access scheme (LEP ref 2.21), following design changes and additions.

This extension to the original Langley scheme focuses more closely on the highway improvement elements. This comprises a more holistic response to the expected re-distribution of traffic from Hollow Hill Lane to High Street, which is due to be permanently closed. The scheme extension is therefore designed to increase capacity and to reduce additional congestion and delay through Langley.

Although it was originally presented as one overall extension project, this follow up development is split into three, interlinking sections, all of which have been designed to enhance the originally redeveloped site still further, as well as proving new capacity as part of the overall mitigation measures, and new features to further enhance the specific location.

At the time of writing this report, sections 1 and 2 are currently in construction. Section 3 is due to commence on site in late October 2021. All three sections are due to be completed by March 2022.

The overall aspiration over the medium term is to redevelop the whole route from Langley Station, via Station Road and High Street Langley, to the junction with the A4 / London Road. This will complete the mitigation measures set out above, and will provide an even more resilient and free flowing north/south link.

Plans for the future are expected to include consideration of reallocation of roadspace, for public transport and cyclists. Hence, the highway improvements are ultimately expected to facilitate more sustainable travel options for all road users.

10. Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

In relation to the removal of the station car park redevelopment from this scheme, changes in scope at a relatively advanced stage of the preparations are always likely to cause setbacks and delays to the completion of the programme. However, it was important to ensure that all aspects

of the scheme delivered satisfactory levels of benefit. The benefits arising from the revised scheme far outweighed the temporary delays to the overall programme.

Having noted the value of the additional measures, the traffic management improvements did not directly relate to the specific objectives of the original scheme, i.e. greater accessibility, promotion of active travel and improved connectivity with public transport. The eventual package of measures do all contribute to a wider, more sustainable transport solution designed to meet the needs of all road users, however the benefits were swayed to some extent in favour of traffic management improvements. There is a risk here of delivering a mixed message, here, and it will be important to provide a clear narrative and consistent policies in support of sustainable solutions as we go forward.

The need for mitigation of the expected impacts of the closure of Hollow Hill Lane was ultimately unavoidable. Rather than this being a lesson learnt, there is heightened awareness of the potential and actual impacts of national improvement projects which are not under the control of the Council. Comprehensive engagement with all parties concerned will continue to be essential.

11. Final comments

Slough Borough Council would like to express its appreciation to the Local Enterprise Partnership for the Growth Fund financial contribution and various other forms of LEP / Berkshire Local Transport Body support enabling the delivery of this project. The resulting infrastructure and supporting measures have been successfully constructed and implemented to good effect. The various features have created a safer, more attractive area of public realm, specifically improving social inclusion and accessibility to Langley Station. Increased connectivity has been achieved, with sustainable travel options, including public transport and active travel being made more realistic and attractive at this location. The scheme also offers actual and potential benefits to network users, commuters, and residents, increasing wider connectivity with the both the rest of the borough and with neighbouring locations including Heathrow Airport and beyond.

End of report

Appendix 2

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Independent Assessment Summary Report: Langley Station Access

One Year Impact Report

October 2021

www.hatch.co.uk

Independent Assessment

- i. This technical note provides an independent assessment of the one-year Impact Report submitted by Slough Borough Council (SBC) in relation to the Langley Station Access project.
- ii. The scheme received £1.5 million funding through the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (TVB LEP) Local Growth Fund deal. As part of the on-going assurance process, TVB LEP requires all funded schemes to produce one-year and five-year post-implementation impact reports to demonstrate how each scheme has performed against expectations.

Process

- iii. The one and five-year impact reports are expected to assess the following elements of the scheme:
 - a. did it get built?
 - b. was it to plan?
 - c. was it on time?
 - d. was it to budget?
 - e. is it working ok?
 - f. what impact has it had?
 - g. any learning points?
- iv. Hatch have applied these criteria, but also sought to use the process as positive influence to identify specific ways in which project scheme design or delivery could be enhanced to enhance future value of this scheme or other future LEP funded schemes.

Scheme Summary

- v. Slough Borough Council received £1.5m from the TVB LEP Local Growth Fund as part of an overall estimated scheme cost of £1,760,000. TVB LEP's contribution to the scheme accounted for 85% of all estimated scheme costs.
- vi. Station Road is a north/south link running from Langley Station to the Harrow Marker junction (previously a roundabout) in the heart of Langley Village. This connects with Langley Road, to the west, and High Street (Langley) which ultimately connects with the A4/London Road.

- vii. This specific project focusses on accessibility around the station which has not been socially inclusive and environmentally focused modes of travel. Linked to this, the station approach area was not previously helpful overall to people with reduced mobility. The scheme was therefore designed to address both aspects; to improve access to the station, improve accessibility at the location, and specifically to encourage walking and cycling as well as public transport.
- viii. The planned work consisted of the following elements:
- Improved cycle parking facilities within and around the station:
 - Introduction of a Cycle Hire Slough docking station within grassed area just north of Alderbury Road.
 - Improvement of cycling facilities on-street in the vicinity of the station, including:
 - Provision of a zebra crossing on Station Road adjacent to Alderbury Road;
 - Introduction of shared use areas on Station Road and the junction with Alderbury Road; and
 - Introduction of Advance Stop Line (ASLs) on the Waterside Drive arm of the Waterside Drive / Station Road junction.
 - Improved pedestrian facilities to and from the station, both from the north and the south approaches:
 - Provision of a new, signalised, diagonal Toucan crossing at Station Road/ Waterside Drive junction;
 - Provision of a new, signalised, Toucan crossing across the Access Road, at Station Road/ Waterside Drive junction;
 - Provision of a new zebra crossing facility on Station Road adjacent to Alderbury Road; and
 - Provision of improved non-signalised pedestrian facilities at the Waterside Drive / Station Road junction to the north of the railway bridge.
 - Provision of a new traffic island on Waterside Drive, as an uncontrolled crossing point;
 - Conversion of the Harrow Market roundabout into a signalised junction:
 - Connects the approaches to Langley Village from Station Road (to the north), Langley Road (to the west) and High Street, Langley (to the south).
 - The reconfiguration of the station car park including a new drop-off area was left out of the final design.

- ix. It is important to note that the planned improvements were part of a much wider strategic programme being delivered by Slough Borough Council. This programme is a collective response to the diverse challenges and opportunities, including the need for improved traffic management, promotion of public transport, increased levels of active travel, improved air quality and related environmental requirements, and so forth.
- x. The Langley Highway Improvement (scheme extension) is currently in progress will redistribute traffic from Hollow Hill Lane to High Street, which is due to be permanently closed. The scheme extension will increase capacity and reduce congestion and delay through Langley.
- xi. The business case for the proposed scheme outlined how the performance of the scheme would be assessed against the project objectives to demonstrate the value for money for the funding of the scheme. These objectives related to improved pedestrian and cyclist access to Langley station, provide reconfigured parking arrangements and drop off facility for Langley Station and improved perception of safety and security.
- xii. The scheme was completed in September 2019, however, due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the notably impact on traffic levels across the network, it was agreed with TVB LEP and the Berkshire Local Transport Body that the monitoring report be delayed until all the COVID restrictions had been lifted.

Review Findings

General Observations

- xiii. The planned works started slightly behind schedule in March 2018 following the concerns about the value of re-developing the car park at the station. Additional modelling was carried out which showed that there would be no net benefit of this element of the scheme. The initial timeframe was for all work to be completed within 2018 but, with the revised scope of the scheme, the end date for full completion was revised to September 2019. The revised date of completion was met by Slough Borough Council.
- xiv. The scheme was delivered on budget for a final cost of £1.76m. This included the original station access features as well as the revisions to the

designs for the junction improvements which were accommodated within the eventual overall scheme.

- xv. The one-year report includes helpful visual evidence of the pre-scheme locations and post-scheme implementation of the improvements. These clearly bring to life how the project funding has made enhancements and changes to the area improving the access for pedestrians and cyclists, including both new zebra crossings and signalisation phases at key junctions. These have led to an improvement in road safety, both actual and perceived. The crossings have been added refreshed cycle lane markings and all necessary signage.
- xvi. Limited quantitative data has been available and was not provided within the One Year evaluation report. Modal switch from private car usage to active travel and public transport was not a specific objective in the business case but was seen as a necessity in terms of sustainability. Given the impacts of COVID-19 at the time of writing this report, it was possible to investigate ongoing changes to behavioural patterns.
- xvii. SBC's overall conclusion is that the infrastructure and supporting measures have been successfully constructed and implemented to good effect. The various features have created a safer, more attractive area of public realm, specifically improving social inclusion and accessibility to Langley Station.

Conclusions

- xviii. The SBC one-year impact report is a well-constructed and balanced document, making good use of the available evidence at this stage. Whilst the agreed delay in producing this report was agreed with TVB LEP and Berkshire Local Transport Body no quantitative evidence or survey data was provided at this stage.
- xix. The report also provides very helpful photographs of the before and after context for the scheme which brings to life the changes which have been implemented because of TVB LEP and SBC investment. While the report helpfully outlines how the scheme has addressed the multiple issues and challenges surrounding safety and access to Langley station, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

- xx. SBC recognises that undertaking a one-year impact report is too soon to provide a realistic assessment of the actual outcomes of the scheme. The Council expects to be able to provide a much more detailed review of the scheme at the five-year evaluation report milestone.
- xxi. The key points for consideration, both to enhance the future outcomes of the project and to facilitate wider learning, include:
- While the report provides a positive indication of the scheme improving the safety and accessibility to Langley Station, providing quantitative data for the five-year report will be important to evaluate the impact and outcomes of the scheme. Data includes measuring the uptake in public transport in the area, walking and cycling counts and usage numbers of the cycle docking station in Alderbury Road. This approach to future monitoring would provide greater assurance on project impacts and outcomes to TVLEP and SBC.
 - The scheme focussed on addressing a number of challenges to do with accessibility and safety to Langley Station. Going beyond qualitative and inferred assessments of these types of observed changes, future monitoring and evaluation could also consider local survey data, air quality and road safety data along the corridor compared to pre-investment.
 - For future monitoring reports, providing clarity on whether the revised start date of the scheme was on time. It will be helpful to see if the revised timeframe for a project of this nature was met.
 - For future monitoring reports, provide a breakdown of costs to show that the estimated costs and costs incurred from the scheme align and show that the scheme was delivered on budget.
 - For future monitoring reports, the report should include key maps and locations of the scheme interventions and, where possible, visual evidence to help contextualise the pre-scheme investment position and the post-investment position.

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MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB) – THURSDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2021

CONTACT OFFICER: Josie Wragg, Chief Executive, Slough Borough Council, lead officer to the BLTB

Item 9: Transport for the South East – Subscription Report Update

Purpose of Report

1. Per your meeting in November 2020, you agreed to renew the annual subscription to Transport for the South East (TfSE) of £58,000 for 2020/21, with the amount to be split 6 ways between the constituent authorities.
2. In its role as accountable body for the Berkshire Local Transport Body, Slough BC collects contributions from BLTB members and passes the subscriptions to East Sussex County Council, the accountable body for TfSE.
3. TfSE is now focused on delivering a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for its geography. The SIP will form the final part of the transport strategy, bringing together the outputs from the TfSE area studies and thematic studies, to become the blueprint for investment in the south east for the next 30 years. The SIP will make the case to decision makers, primarily the DfT but also Treasury, but will also be easily understood by a range of audiences including residents and businesses.

The SIP will set out where, when, and under what conditions packages of schemes, interventions and wider policy initiatives should be implemented to deliver the transport strategy and achieve the vision for 2050. The document will need to promote the south east and demonstrate the benefits of continued investment in the region. In part this is about levelling up communities within the south east but also, crucially, to demonstrate that levelling up in the south east will have benefits to the whole country.

The SIP will be published for consultation in June 2022, with the final SIP agreed by the TfSE Board in March 2023.

Recommendation

4. You are recommended to agree to a renewed annual BLTB subscription of £58,000 for TfSE to cover the period 2021/22, with the amount to be split 6 ways between the constituent authorities.

Other Implications

Financial

5. TfSE will be submitting an ambitious multi-year funding proposal to the Government. This will enable TfSE to continue the delivery of the technical programme and to implement the SIP.

6. The Spending Review 2021

A three-year spending review was launched on 7 September 2021, with a closing date for departmental bids to be submitted to the Treasury by 13 September 2021. The Spending Review was announced on 27 October 2021, alongside the Autumn Budget.

7. As part of its departmental bid, the DfT is hoping to secure funding to support the seven STBs in England. The details of the DfT's proposals for STBs will be clarified following the publication of the Spending Review in October, and STBs are required to submit competitive bids for funding to the DfT as part of this process.
8. STB bids to the department will need to set out how the STB will support the delivery of the DfT's priorities. It is likely STBs will be required to provide a local contribution, which the sixteen constituent authorities in the TfSE geography already undertake.
9. Following agreement by the Partnership Board, TfSE has submitting a multi-year funding bid to the department. Although it remains unclear whether multi-year funding will be available to STBs, it is important to make the case for longer term funding settlements to ensure that there is certainty over the technical work programme as TfSE progresses into delivery of the strategic investment plan (SIP). The bid will be focused on the delivery of the core functions of an STB, particularly the technical programme and the implementation of the SIP in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
10. Central to the TfSE proposal is the need to bring forward credible and affordable long-term proposals. The submission sets out how we will use the certainty provided by a multi-year funding settlement to accelerate delivery, speed up processes and realise efficiencies.
11. The submission to government can be found [here](#). The key elements of the bid are:
 - TfSE Ambition** – building on the 2050 vision in the transport strategy, the bid sets out what TfSE would like to achieve through the delivery of its strategic investment plan.
 - TfSE achievements** – TfSE has consistently delivered against its agreed objectives and priorities, as well as working flexibly to respond to emerging policy and changing circumstances, e.g., Covid-19 pandemic, Bus Back Better research, etc. This section of the bid highlights our achievements over the last three years and the benefits this has delivered.
 - Supporting delivery of DfT priorities** – the work undertaken by TfSE has aligned closely with DfT priorities. This is reflected in the warm welcome that the TfSE transport strategy has received from the department and TfSE continues to ensure that it is well positioned to inform and deliver against departmental priorities, such as decarbonisation, Bus Back Better and EV infrastructure.
 - Our funding requirements** – this section of the submission sets out the financial ask over the three-year period. The bid mainly focuses on the continued delivery of the technical programme and moves into the delivery of schemes included in the SIP in the final two years of the bid. The technical programme includes work on an analytical and assurance framework to support the development of business cases for SIP schemes, additional work on thematic areas (such as future mobility, freight, rural and rail) and the ongoing implementation of the four new work streams that STBs have been asked to lead by DfT (see below). The additional work included with the implementation of the SIP and the four new workstreams does mean that there will be potential implications on the capacity within TfSE to deliver. As such the bid does include provision for additional staff, with the intention that any new posts would be funded through DfT funding and the TfSE Board would be informed of any future staffing proposals.
12. The multi-year funding proposal is ambitious and will cement TfSE's role as a strategic leader with the ability to implement the transport strategy. The proposal has been developed to ensure that

TfSE has the tools to deliver against challenging workstreams, such as decarbonisation, local capability and capacity, as well as moving the organisation in a direction to implement the strategic investment plan through the required business cases and scheme development. The proposal will enable TfSE to move faster and further than previously, delivering benefits to local authorities, residents, the DfT and the national economy.

13. Additional STB priorities – funding bid

The Department for Transport has written to all STBs in England to request that they prepare non-competitive funding bids for four new areas of work:

Decarbonisation – helping the Department and local authorities to implement the commitments made in the Transport Decarbonisation Plan.

Buses – helping local authorities to deliver on the commitments in Bus Back Better and develop an effective intra-regional bus network.

EV Infrastructure Strategy – assisting local authorities in the rollout of EV infrastructure, potentially through regional strategies.

Local Authority Capability – playing a role in building capability within resource constrained local authorities, to help them in the planning and delivery of local transport.

14. The four areas reflect DfT priorities and STBs will be expected to work with local authorities on the delivery of the proposals. STBs were given 6 weeks to bid and were asked to keep proposals brief (1-2 pages per workstream), covering an overview of the aims of the project, the methodology that will be followed and a timeline of work. The work must commence this financial year, but delivery can roll over into 2022/23.

15. The Department guidance stated that joint bids from STBs will be welcomed for appropriate workstreams, and TfSE has been working closely with all six STBs to develop the most appropriate mix of delivery methods.

16. TfSE submitted its proposals to the DfT on 20 October 2021 and expects to hear back from the DfT within the next few weeks so that each of the workstreams can be mobilised prior to the end of the financial year.

17. The TfSE Board have not yet considered the local authority contributions for 2022/23 yet – this will happen in early 2022, but officer level discussions have indicated that the amounts are likely to remain unchanged.

18. The approach for calculating contributions has been developed in a pragmatic manner with members and reflects the sizes of different member authorities.

Type of authority	Proposed level of contribution per year	Total
County councils (East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex)	£58,000	£290,000
Unitary authorities (Brighton and Hove, Isle of Wight, Medway, Portsmouth, Southampton)	£30,000	£150,000
Other partner authorities (Berkshire Local Transport Body)	£58,000 (shared between partner organisations)	£58,000
Total		£498,000

Risk Management

19. In November 2015, the DfT published [proposals as part of its devolution agenda](#)¹ to establish sub-national transport bodies on a statutory basis. It gave [Transport for the North](#)² and [Midlands Connect](#)³ as examples, although TfN remains the only STB to be afforded statutory status.
20. The risk for the Thames Valley Berkshire area is that by not engaging with the government's policy to promote sub-national transport bodies, it will be harder to fund infrastructure proposals that are significant at the sub-national scale. Indeed, the Department for Transport has asked STBs to lead on the prioritisation for schemes to be included the Major Roads Network and Roads Investment Strategy. This role for STBs is expected to continue and engagement from local authorities in the development of the SIP will be critical.
21. The risk associated with participating in these arrangements is that time, resources and energy will be devoted to the new arrangements which fail to deliver any tangible benefits.
22. At the March 2017 meeting you agreed that the BLTB should join the new arrangements, as opposed to the six individual unitary authorities, as response to these risks. The logic of the proposal is that the six unitary councils have a shared interest at the sub-national scale, and that our participation can be safely streamlined through joint participation.
23. Having agreed to join the organisation, it is appropriate to contribute to its costs.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/regions-to-be-offered-legal-powers-to-transform-transport>

² <http://www.transportforthenorth.com/>

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482247/midlands-engine-for-growth.pdf

24. [Section 21\(1\) of the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016](#)⁴ amended Part 5 of the Local Transport Act 2008 as follows,

“The Secretary of State may by regulations establish a sub-national transport body for any area in England outside Greater London.”

The Act goes on to describe further the regulations for a sub-national transport body should be made.

25. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB should any questions arise on the application of this enabling legislation to the arrangements for the proposed Transport for the South East.

Supporting Information

26. Attached at Appendix 1 of this report is the budget report that was agreed by the TfSE Shadow Board on 21 October 2021.
27. At the July 2021 meeting of the TfSE Partnership Board, the budget for financial year 2021/22 was signed off by the Board. This was based upon the £1.225m grant funding agreement from DfT and the £500,000 local contributions. The budget also considered the carry forward of committed funding from the previous financial year, as well as reserves, to give an operating budget of £3.223m.

Conclusion

28. The Shadow Board for ‘Transport for the South East’ will now focus on delivering a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for its geography. The SIP will form the final part of the transport strategy, bringing together the outputs from the TfSE area studies and thematic studies, to become the blueprint for investment in the south east for the next 30 years.

Background Papers

29. Correspondence between LEPs and briefing notes supplied by the TfSE shadow project team.

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/1/section/21/enacted>

Appendix 1

Report to: Partnership Board –Transport for the South East

Date of meeting: 18 October 2021

By: Lead Officer, Transport for the South East

Title of report: Financial Update – Quarter 2

Purpose of report: To update the Board on the budget position for Transport for the South East

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the current financial position for 2021/22 to the end of September 2021.

1. Overview

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership Board on the revenue budget for Transport for the South East (TfSE) at the end of September 2021.

2. Quarter 2 – Budget Update

2.1 At the July 2021 meeting of the Partnership Board, the budget for financial year 2021/22 was signed off by the Board. This was based upon the £1.225m grant funding agreement from DfT and the £500,000 local contributions. The budget also considered the carry forward of committed funding from the previous financial year, as well as reserves, to give an operating budget of £3.223m.

2.2 The main elements of proposed expenditure relate to delivering the technical programme, supporting delivery of the Strategic Investment Plan and staffing costs.

Expenditure to date is just under £800,000 and is presented in Appendix 1.

2.3 Staffing costs are slightly lower than expected at £306,605. This is due to vacancies within the team, specifically the communications manager (now filled) and strategy manager posts. The end of year forecast has been revised to reflect the lower costs.

2.4 To date, the main technical programme expenditure has focused on the five area studies, future mobility strategy and the freight, logistics and international gateways study. To date more than £471,000 has been spent, with the programme on track to spend approximately £1.8m by the end of March 2022.

2.5 The budget also makes provision for operational costs and communications and engagement activities, including events, website development and stakeholder management tools. The spend in these areas is currently lower than anticipated but will increase in the second half of the year with increased communication and engagement activity associated with the SIP, a return to face-to-face meetings, commitment to event attendance later in the year and the publication of the annual report.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 Members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the financial position at the end of quarter two.

RUPERT CLUBB

Lead Officer

Transport for the South East

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Appendix 1: End of September 2021 budget position

Budget YTD Forecast Notes

	Budget	YTD	Forecast	Notes
INCOME				
Local Contributions	498,000	498,000	498,000	
DfT Grant	1,225,000	1,225,000	1,225,000	
Reserves	462,304	462,304	462,304	
Carry forward	63,385	63,385	63,385	
Committed funding	974,354	974,354	974,354	
TOTAL INCOME	3,223,043	3,223,043	3,223,043	
EXPENDITURE				
Staffing				
Core Policy Team	555,000	261,109	532,838	Reduced forecast to reflect staff vacancies
Additional team resource	120,000	45,496	120,000	
Technical Programme				
Transport Strategy	50,000		50,000	
Area Studies - Outer Orbital	315,692	119,852	315,692	
Area Studies - Inner Orbital	273,764	83,011	273,764	
Area Studies - South Central	273,279	107,030	273,279	
Area Studies - South West Radial	315,000	49,273	315,000	

Area Studies - South East Radial	315,000	51,130	315,000	
Strategic Investment Plan	160,000	0	60,000	Variance will be committed and carried forward to next financial year
SIP consultation	20,000	0	10,000	Variance will be committed and carried forward to next financial year
Thematic Studies	75,000	0	50,000	Variance will be committed and carried forward to next financial year
Future Mobility	22,629	26,842	22,629	
Freight and Logistics Strategy	125,000	37,505	125,000	
Analytical Framework	125,000	0	75,000	
Other costs	7,000	-3,244	7,000	
TfSE Future Role	30,000	10,000	30,000	
Operational Expenses	35,000	2,404	20,000	
Communications/Engagement				
Events	20,000	1,063	10,000	
Advertising and publicity	25,000	6,520	25,000	
Website	10,000	14	10,000	
Stakeholder Database	7,000		7,000	
Media Subscriptions	2,500	666	2,500	
Carry forward for Tech programme/committed funding			195,000	
Carry forward (non-technical)			37,162	
Reserves	341,179		341,179	£97,000 ringfenced for DfT funded fixed term posts
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,223,043	798,671	3,223,043	

BLTB Forward Plan 2022

Meeting	Deadline for final reports:	Agenda published	Agenda items
10 March 2022	18 February	2 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • Financial (re) approval – scheme 2.34 Slough MRT Phase 2 • One-year-on Impact report for scheme 2.04 – Wokingham: Arborfield Relief Road • One-year-on Impact report for scheme 2.09.1 - Sustainable Transport NCN 422 • One-year-on Impact report for scheme 2.13 – Wokingham: Thames Valley Park and Ride • Forward Plan
14 July 2022	24 June	6 July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chair and Vice Chair • Progress reports • Forward Plan
10 November 2022	21 October	2 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress reports • Forward Plan • Transport for the South East – Annual Subscriptions report

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