

BERKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY (BLTB)

REPORT TO: BLTB

DATE: 20 November 2014

CONTACT OFFICER: Nick Carter, Chief Executive, West Berkshire Council

PART I

Financial Approval for 2.17 Slough: A355 route

Purpose of Report

1. To consider giving financial approval to scheme 2.17 Slough: A355 route.
2. This is a scheme to improve traffic flow on the strategic north-south A355 route between the M4, Slough Trading Estate and the M40 and enhancing access to Slough town centre.

Recommendation

3. You are recommended to give scheme 2.17 Slough: A355 route full financial approval in the sum of £4,400,000 over two years (2015/16 and 2016/17) with the terms of the funding agreement set out at paragraph 10 step 5 below.

Other Implications

Financial

4. 2.17 Slough: A355 route is one of the named schemes that received indicative approval for spending in 2016/17 in the [Thames Valley Berkshire Local Growth Deal](#) announced on 7 July 2014. This was despite the original bid being for a 2015/16 start. The scheme promoter has continued to develop the scheme, and an opportunity has arisen to advance the start date following the rescheduling of another scheme in the programme.
5. There is a report elsewhere on the LTB agenda supporting an LEP request for government permission to swap the funding status with a scheme identified for funding from the “pre-allocated Local Transport Body” pot in 2015/16.
6. This report recommends that Slough Borough Council be authorised to draw down the capital sum, £4,400,000 from the “pre-allocated Local Transport Body Funding”.
7. The funding agreement set out at paragraph 10 step 5 sets out the roles and responsibilities, reporting and auditing arrangements, timing and triggers for payments, contributions from other funders, consequences of delay, consequences of failure, claw back, and evaluation requirements at one and five years on.

Risk Management

8. The risk management arrangements already put in place by the Local Transport Body are as follows:

- The [Assurance Frameworkⁱⁱ](#) has been drafted following DfT guidance and has been approved by the DfT for use in allocating capital funds for transport schemes
- White Young Green (WYG) have been appointed as Independent Assessors and have provided a full written report (see Appendix 1) on the full business case for the scheme
- The funding agreement set out at paragraph 10, step 5 makes clear that the financial risk associated with implementation of the scheme rests with the scheme promoter.

Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

9. The scheme promoter is a local authority and they have to act within the law. Slough Borough Council will provide legal support for the BLTB, should any questions arise.

Supporting Information

10. The table below sets out the details of this scheme's compliance with steps 1-5 of paragraph 14 of [the full Assurance Frameworkⁱⁱⁱ](#).

Assurance Framework Check list	2.17 Slough: A355 route			
Step 1: Development of Scheme proposal; initial sifting, scoring and prioritisation leading to award of Programme Entry Status. (See paragraphs 11-13)	<p>Slough Trading Estate and Slough Town Centre are two key employment locations within TVB and both are important in the delivery of the SEP. It is clear that traffic congestion already has adverse impact on business efficiency and inward investment and, as such, threatens the future economic vitality of Slough. This scheme aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the efficiency of Slough's businesses by reducing journey times and providing reliability along this corridor • support retention and growth of employment in Slough by protecting and enhancing the connectivity advantages which make Slough a good place to do business and a focus for future inward investment • reduce CO2 and NO2 emission levels, from stop start road traffic and hybrid public transport alternatives, which in turn assists in tackling this AQMA zone. <p>The opportunity to unlock some further housing opportunities and regeneration of parts of Slough along the Farnham Road and Chalvey could also be progressed as a result of improved connectivity.</p> <p>In 2013, the outline scheme was assessed in accordance with paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Assurance Framework and was given 22 points and ranked equal 10th of the 28 schemes originally submitted, and equal 9th of the schemes finally considered by the BLTB.</p>			
	Factor	Raw score	Weighting	Weighted score
	Maximum strategic Impact	3	2	6
	Economic Impact	2	2	4
	VFM	1	1.5	1.5
Ease of Deliverability	3	1.5	4.5	

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	Matched Funding	2	1	2
	Environmental	2	1	2
	Social	2	1	2
	Total			22
	<p>The scheme was subsequently considered again for inclusion in the Strategic Economic Plan. A similar assessment process was used and the scheme was given 29 points and ranked equal 1st of 37 schemes originally submitted and equal 1st of the schemes that were included in the SEP.</p>			
	Factor	Raw score	Weighting	Weighted score
	Strategy	3	1.5	4.5
	Deliverability	3	2	6
	Economic Impact	3	4	12
	TVB area coverage	3	1.5	4.5
	Environment	2	0.5	1
	Social	2	0.5	1
Total			29	
<p>Step 2: Programme Entry: evolution of the scheme from outline proposal to full business case, external view on the business case, and independent assessment (See paragraphs 15 and 16)</p>	<p>Following the announcement of the Local Growth Deal on 7 July 2014, the scheme was given Programme Entry Status at the BLTB meeting on 24 July 2014^{iv}.</p> <p>The outline of the scheme has been publicly available TVB LEP website^v since July 2013.</p> <p>A fuller version has been available in the SEP Implementation Plan Annexe^{vi} (scheme 2.17 page 123) in draft since December 2013 and in the final version since March 2014.</p> <p>The Slough Borough Council website^{vii} holds the latest details of the full business case, including the VfM statement certified by the senior responsible officer.</p> <p>The report of the Independent Assessor is attached at Appendix 1. The Independent Assessor was asked to report as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completeness – has the promoter prepared a complete Full Business Case submission, when judged against the prevailing advice from the DfT ○ Accuracy – has the promoter performed the relevant calculations and assessments accurately and without error ○ Relevance – has the Full Business Case considered all relevant matters, including use of appropriate forecasting models and planning assumptions, and has it included any irrelevant considerations such unduly-optimistic assumptions or out of date modelling data ○ Value for Money – does the scheme promoter's Value for Money assessment comply with the prevailing DfT guidance ○ Evaluation arrangements – has the scheme promoter made provision for appropriate post-implementation evaluation of the scheme. ○ Remedies – where the independent assessment reveals a gap between the FBC supplied and the standard anticipated by the DfT guidance, then the advice for the LTB should include 			

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	recommendations for remedial actions required – e.g., collection of further data, sensitivity tests on particular assumptions etc.
Step 3: Conditional Approval	The Independent Assessor has recommended that in this case a Full Approval is appropriate.
Step 4: Recommendation of Financial Approval - High Value for Money - Support of the Independent assessor	<p>The scheme has a Benefit- Cost Ratio (BCR) of 5.83.</p> <p>DfT has set a threshold of 4.00 and schemes with BCRs above this can be described as having Very High Value for Money.</p> <p>As noted above the scheme has the full support of the Independent assessor.</p> <p>The recommendation is that the scheme receives Full Approval.</p>
Step 5: Formal Agreement - roles - responsibilities - reporting - auditing - timing and triggers for payments, - contributions from other funders, - consequences of delay, - consequences of failure, - claw back, - evaluation one and five years on	<p>Roles: The BLTB is a part funder of the scheme. Slough Borough Council is the scheme promoter, and is the relevant highway and planning authority.</p> <p>Responsibilities: The BLTB is responsible for allocating the capital finance in accordance with the Assurance Framework. Slough Borough Council is responsible for all aspects of the design, procurement, construction and implementation of the scheme, including its responsibilities as highway and planning authority, and any other statutory duties.</p> <p>Reporting: In addition to any reporting requirements within Slough Borough Council, the scheme promoter will also make summary reports on progress to each meeting of the BLTB until the scheme reached practical completion. In particular, Slough Borough Council must report on any reduction in the size, scope or specification of the scheme; and on any substantial savings against the scheme budget whether achieved by such changes to the size, scope or specification of the scheme, or through procurement, or through the efficient implementation of the scheme.</p> <p>Auditing: If and when the DfT or Slough Borough Council (acting as accountable body for the BLTB) requests access to financial or other records for the purposes of an audit of the accounts, Slough Borough Council will cooperate fully.</p> <p>Timing and Triggers for payments: Slough Borough Council will submit an annual invoice for each financial year together with a certificate of work completed. Slough Borough Council (acting as accountable body for the BLTB) will satisfy itself of the correctness of the certificate before paying the invoice.</p> <p>Contributions from Other Funders: Slough Borough capital programme will contribute £700,000 over two years (2015/16-2016/17); in addition there will be £700,000 of s.106 contributions secured by Slough Borough Council over two years (2015/16-2016/17).</p> <p>Consequences of Delay: In the event that the scheme experiences minor delays to its programme (no more than 10 weeks), Slough Borough Council will report these delays and the reasons for them, and the proposed remedial action to the next available meeting of the BLTB. In the event that the scheme experiences major delays to its programme (11 weeks or longer) Slough Borough Council will be required to seek permission from BLTB to reschedule any payments that are due, or may be delayed in falling due because of the delay to the programme.</p> <p>Consequences of Failure: As soon as it becomes apparent to Slough Borough Council that it will not be possible to deliver the scheme at all, written notice</p>

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	<p>shall be given to Slough Borough Council (acting as accountable body for the BLTB). No further monies shall be paid to Slough Borough Council after this point. In addition, consideration will be given to recovering any monies paid to Slough Borough Council in respect of this scheme.</p> <p>Claw back: If the overall scheme achieves savings against budget, these savings will be shared by the BLTB and the other funders noted above in proportion to the amounts committed to the original budget. Slough Borough Council (acting as accountable body for the BLTB) reserves the right to claw back any such savings amounts, and any repayments due as a consequence of scheme failure.</p> <p>Evaluation One and Five years on: Slough Borough Council will work with WYG to produce scheme evaluations One and Five years after practical completion.</p>

Conclusion

11. This is a well-planned scheme that will improve the capacity, speed and reliability of the road network in Slough.

Background Papers

12. The LTB and SEP papers are available on request

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

ⁱⁱ<http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/Portals/0/FileStore/StrategicInfrastructure/StrategicInfrastructure/BLTB/Assurance%20Framework%20for%20Berkshire%20Local%20Transport%20Body%2014%20November%202013.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ<http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/Portals/0/FileStore/StrategicInfrastructure/StrategicInfrastructure/BLTB/Assurance%20Framework%20for%20Berkshire%20Local%20Transport%20Body%2014%20November%202013.pdf>

^{iv}<http://www.slough.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=601&Mid=5148&Ver=4>

^v<http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/Portals/0/FileStore/StrategicInfrastructure/StrategicInfrastructure/BLTB/Slough-6-A355-corridor.pdf>

^{vi}<http://thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk/Portals/0/FileStore/StrategicEconomicPlan/TVB%20SEP%20-%20Annexes%20to%20Implementation%20Plan.pdf>

^{vii}<http://www.slough.gov.uk/parking-travel-and-roads/plans-for-the-future.aspx>