
**DARLINGTON EASTERN TRANSPORT CORRIDOR
STATE OF READINESS FUNDING**

**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Nick Wallis,
Highways and Transport Portfolio
Councillor Don Bristow, Resource Management Portfolio**

Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To obtain the necessary funding so that the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor (DETC) scheme is completed to the required State of Readiness for a start of construction on site in Spring 2006.

Information and Analysis

Background

2. The DETC is the sole major scheme in the Borough Council's current Local Transport Plan (LTP) and is included in the Provisional Second Local Transport Plan for 2006 to 2011. Its capital cost is £12.1M. The scheme comprises approximately 3 kilometres of 7.3 metre wide carriageway connecting the A66 road to the east of the town with the B6279 Houghton Road incorporating pedestrian facilities, cycle track and bridleway bridge over the A66 linking to the National Cycle Network. The scheme is an integral part of the adopted Borough of Darlington Local Plan (BDLP), which is currently being reviewed to meet new planning guidelines. Also, it is an important part of the Tees Valley Structure Plan. The scheme includes various essential improvements to the A66 resulting from the DETC.
3. A Major Scheme Business Case was submitted to Government Office in August this year in support of securing the necessary Government funding to commence construction in Spring 2006. In the business case the following interim milestones were identified, all of which are realistic and achievable. However, an essential prerequisite for potential Government funding is that the scheme is at the required State of Readiness for construction to be able to commence in Spring 2006.

| Interim Milestones | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Local Transport Plan | Adopted |
| Planning Application | Approved |
| Compulsory Purchase Order | Awaiting Confirmation |
| continued ... | |

| Interim Milestones | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Side Roads Order | Awaiting confirmation |
| Land Purchase (by agreement) | Almost complete |
| LTP Submission | July 2005 |
| Funding Decision | December 2005 |
| Begin Construction | June 2006 |
| Complete Construction | December 2007 |
| Deadline for Subsequent Part 1 Claims under Land Compensation Act 1973 | September 2008 |

4. On the basis of this timetable the Council will seek the bulk of the funding for the scheme in 2006/7 and 2007/8. Most of the affected land owners have sold their land by agreement and agreement with the last two affected landowners is expected to be finalised shortly, avoiding the need to acquire any of the land by compulsory purchase.
5. In order to deliver the project on time if funding is committed, it is essential that the final stages of the detailed design work and contract documentation continues to completion. This includes work by the Highways Agency's Consultants Faber Maunsell in connection with the works on the Trunk Road A66 at Little Burdon, the new roundabout on the TR A66 at the eastern end of the DETC, the section of road in between and the new bridleway bridge. The schedule below gives a resume of the tasks to be completed and the associated costs. In summary, to allow the scheme to progress will require the release of £160,000 of Corporate Capital funding.

| Description | Cost £K |
|--|----------------|
| Complete detailed design; prepare contract drawings, Bill of Quantities and Appendices for DETC and trunk road works. Prepare main contract documents and carry out tender process including tender assessment and award of works. Because of contract value the OJEU procedures will be required. | 100 |
| Finalise detailed Statutory Undertaker diversions and associated advance payments for design and programming | 5 |
| On going Geotechnical Advice | 4 |
| Completion of design of Bridleway bridge | 3 |
| On going Safety Audit requirements | 5 |
| Completion of statutory processes | 4 |
| Outstanding costs to date | 39 |
| TOTAL £ | 160 |

6. The release of this additional £0.160m of corporate funding will reduce the amount of corporate funds available for future capital programmes.

7. To date the Council has spent £0.700m from its own corporate resources on statutory procedures, land acquisition, design, site investigation, advance environmental works and other necessary items. For schemes of this nature it is recognised that these costs can generally range between 7% and 13% of the project cost, depending on many factors such as the number and nature of junctions and structures, ground conditions, complexity of the proposals etc. It is anticipated that DETC fees will be at the lower end of this range.

Outcome of Consultation

8. No external consultation was required.

Legal Implications

9. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

10. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

11. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

Decision Deadline

12. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Members approve the allocation of £160,000 to enable the DETC to be completed to the required State of Readiness so that if Government funding is committed in December 2005 construction can start in Spring 2006.
 - (b) This report is forwarded to Council for their formal release of this funding.

Reasons

14. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:

- (a) That in considering the allocation of funding, Government require that the scheme is in the required State of Readiness so there is a certainty that any allocated funding will be utilised.
- (b) To enable Council to formally release this funding as the amount required to be released exceeds Cabinet's delegated limits.

John Buxton
Director of Development and Environment

Background Papers

Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor – Major Scheme Business Case August 2005.

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