



GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership

Board Paper – 8th October 2019

Agenda Item 6	B4063/A40 Corridor Investment
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Supporting Papers	<p>Gloucestershire’s 2014 Strategic Economic Plan: https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/library/4-sep.pdf</p> <p>LEP Board paper October 2017: https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/library/209-item-7-confirm-projects-portfolio-and-available-funds-for-re-allocation_item_7.pdf</p> <p>Gfirst LEP 2019 Draft Local Industrial Strategy: https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2019/gloucestershire_draft_local-industrial-strategy_2019.pdf</p>
Confidentiality	Open
Purpose	For the Full LEP Board to approve the proposed scheme re-alignment of £1.6m pre-approved LEP Growth Deal funding for cycle infrastructure to better integrate with other investment sources, including investment from Highways England and other Growth Deal Projects.
Summary	<p>The opportunity</p> <p>The September 2019 Gfirst LEP draft Local Industrial Strategy identifies better cycle links as one of the key infrastructure investment needs to deliver green growth and modern transport choices. Increased investment in cycling will improve health, reduce congestion and protect the environment.</p> <p>The draft LIS therefore clearly sets out the need to invest in cycle infrastructure and a number of recent investment decisions by the LEP Board, as well as by other delivery partners, have opened up a significant opportunity to deliver a key section of Cycle infrastructure at the core of Gloucestershire’s strategic Cycle Desire Lines (see Appendix A).</p> <p>The map in Appendix B clearly shows how cycle routes along the strategic desire lines set out in Appendix A are being delivered through the £3.6m Highways England (HE) investment in cycle infrastructure along the B4063 and Growth Deal funded investment providing a cycle link between Cheltenham Spa station and the A40.</p>

In conjunction with the West of Cheltenham Transport Improvements Scheme – UK Cyber Business Park project, an opportunity has now arisen, to re-align £1.6m pre-approved LEP Growth Deal funding to safeguard the delivery of cycle infrastructure on the missing A40 section linking Growth Deal funded cycle investment at Cheltenham Spa station with the HE investment in cycle infrastructure along the B4063, as indicated in Appendix B.

Background

2014 SEP allocation

The 2014 Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for Gloucestershire, allocated £1.6m to identify potential capacity improvements at the B4063 Staverton bridge Junction and to reduce congestion under the heading: ‘A40 Regeneration Areas – Improving Connectivity and Resilience’, with the following objectives:

1. Reduce congestion on the A40 corridor and key linkages to it between Cheltenham and the Forest of Dean;
2. Alleviating congestion via addressing congestion hotspots on and in association with the A40 corridor between Cheltenham and the Forest of Dean;
3. Maximise economic productivity and efficiency;
4. Provide improved traffic flow, faster journey times and overall transport network efficiency on the A40 (west) corridor, and the areas of regeneration that connect to it;
5. Address bottlenecks within the transport network, particularly where these are predicted to worsen and put a brake on economic recovery; and
6. Improve access to skills, jobs, goods and services.

Highways England investment and LEP Growth Deal funding re-allocation

Since the 2014 SEP was published, Highways England (HE) approved funding of £3.6m as part of the designated funds for the Super Highway Cycle scheme connecting Cheltenham to Gloucester. The scheme is located along the B4063, over a distance of approximately 5.1 miles extending from the centre of Gloucester to the western outskirts of Cheltenham, as indicated in the map below. Part of the route is on the B4063 and passes through Staverton junction.



As part of an overall scheme review in 2017, the LEP recognised the benefits of working in conjunction with the Highways England investment and agreed that the Staverton scheme can proceed with a strong focus on cycle provision¹.

WCTIS-UK Cyber Business Park and other Growth Deal schemes on the B4063/A40 corridor:

In 2018, the funding context for the A40/B4063 corridor changed further, when GCC agreed to take on the scheme promoter role of the £22m West Cheltenham Transport Improvement Scheme – UK Cyber Business Park (WCTIS) scheme. This significant investment in the corridor contributes and impacts on both:

- The original 2014 SEP ambitions for ‘A40 Regeneration Areas – Improving Connectivity and Resilience’; and
- The HE Cycleway scheme, in particular the section on the A40 between Arle Court and Benhall roundabouts.

The HE Cycle way scheme would also include a widening of the carriageway to provide an additional eastbound cycleway along the A40 between Arle Court Roundabout and Benhall Roundabout. Similarly, the B4063 is widened for an additional eastbound cycleway on its approach to Arle Court Roundabout.

At this section, the HE Cycleway works would have a direct conflict with the WCTIS phases 1 and 3. The WCTIS proposals include for carriageway widening for additional eastbound traffic lanes along the same lengths where HE would install cycleway lanes.

Work has been ongoing between GCC and HE to agree a design solution that can facilitate the amalgamation of the 2 sets of schemes with a new cycle way/footway along these sections. However this work will now require additional works which had not been previously budgeted for. For example, additional carriageway widening works, relocation of fencing and diversion of high value statutory bodies apparatus. If

¹ At that time it was reported that “(...) The scheme will be combined with a £3.6m Highways England programme to enhance cycling provision on this route. The HE proposals are likely to impact on the final design and as a result GCC and HE are working jointly to develop a scheme.” (LEP Board paper October 2017).

	<p>additional funding for these works cannot be found, there is a considerable risk that the opportunity is missed to link recent Growth Deal investment in Cheltenham Spa Station (including improved cycle access between the station and the A40) with the WCTIS investment and the significant HE investment in cycle infrastructure along the corridor. All investment together, however, would provide a significant contribution to the delivery of Gloucestershire’s key strategic cycle desire lines (see Appendix A).</p> <p>The proposal</p> <p>The emerging Local Industrial Strategy for Gloucestershire clearly sets out the need for more investment in cycle infrastructure in Gloucestershire. In addition, the investment context for the A40/B4063 corridor has changed significantly since the original Growth Deal allocation of £1.6 million for Staverton bridge junction, with £3.6 million being allocated for the HE led cycle improvement works on the B4063 and the £22m growth deal funding allocated for the WCTIS scheme on the A40 corridor.</p> <p>Progress in the design work for the WCTIS scheme clearly shows that the WCTIS scheme conflicts with the proposed HE cycle scheme between Arle Court Roundabout and Benhall Roundabout. Along this length, the WCTIS scheme would introduce a new eastbound lane along the same length that a new combined cycleway/footway lane would be constructed by HE. To facilitate a new cycleway/footway would now require additional works and expense that has not been budgeted.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that the £1.6M LEP funds from Staverton are re-allocated to WCTIS Phase 3 and ring-fenced solely for use on the cycleway and associated works. A separate Business Case would be prepared for this £1.6M investment to cover additional carriageway widening works, relocation of fencing and diversion of high value statutory bodies apparatus to enable the delivery of a combined cycleway/footway line alongside the A40, linking the HE investment in the B4063 to both the WCTIS and to improvements to Cheltenham Spa rail station, also funded through the LEP Growth Deal.</p> <p>Timescales:</p> <p>If the LEP Board agrees to £1.6m 2014 SEP allocation to secure the delivery of a comprehensive and cohesive cycle network on the A40/B4063 corridor, a Full Business Case could be presented to the LEP Board for final funding approval in Spring 2020.</p>
<p>Implications, impacts or risks</p>	<p>Failure to ring-fence additional funding for this cycle/footway alongside the A40 could result in these elements not being delivered (or not being delivered in full) though the WCTIS scheme, leaving a piecemeal approach to cycle infrastructure on the overall corridor. However, ensuring the delivery of a high quality A40 cycle/footway link along the A40 by allocating £1.6M to ring-fence these improvements will guarantee the integration of major investment in the A40/B4063 corridor and ensure the delivery of a cohesive cycle network along a key cycle desire line in Gloucestershire, stretching from Cheltenham Spa rail station along the A40 and via the B4063 into Gloucester.</p>
<p>Decision required</p>	<p>The Board is asked to approve that the £1.6M 2014 SEP allocation for Staverton Bridge Junction on the B4063 is re-allocated to WCTIS Phase 3, and ring-fenced solely for use on the cycleway and associated works, linking the HE investment in the B4063 to WCTIS and other Growth Deal investment on the A40.</p>
<p>Recommendati</p>	<p>That the Board agree that the £1.6M 2014 SEP allocation for Staverton Bridge Junction on the B4063 is re-allocated to WCTIS Phase 3, and ring-fenced solely for use on the</p>

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Appendix A: Gloucestershire’s Strategic Cycle Desire Lines

Appendix B: Location Map