

Transport Working Group Notes – 6th March 2018
Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber of Commerce, Genesis Business Park,
Sheffield Road, Rotherham S60 1DX

In attendance:

Andrew Denniff (Chamber of Commerce)
Adrian Platts (Chamber of Commerce)
Matt Reynolds (RMBC)
Tony Hickton (Independent)
Andrew Fosbueary (Enzygo)

Clive Watkinson (JC Snell) – Chair
Simon Brown (Highways England)
Anne Beddoes (BMBC)
Gareth Owen (QFM Group)
Tim Vaughan (Cumberlidge)

Apologies from:

Richard Marshall (Highways England)
David Boden (TM Travel)

Ian Ashmore (RMBC)

Apologies and previous minutes

Adrian Platts (AP) provided apologies, Clive Watkinson (CW) clarified the previous minutes. There were no objections or requests for amendments.

HS2 Update

- Andrew Denniff (AD) stated that until there is an indication of some sort of facility in South Yorkshire, we will not support HS2 at all.
- Ann Beddoes (AB) mentioned that HS2 had narrowed options down to 4 possible stations, though any assurances to achieve this objective are yet to materialise
- Matt Reynolds (MR) highlighted that SCR are reinvestigating the possibility of a parkway style station

Mottram By-Pass

- Tony Hickton (TH) updated the group on the development of the Mottram By-Pass and highlighted the crawler lanes that are planned to be developed to reduce the level of congestion heading out towards the A57 at Mottram
- TH advised that there was also an opportunity to improve the road by using a by-pass option further down the A57 link carriageway
- Simon Brown (SB) was mindful to state that the by-pass is only for Mottram and doesn't include Tintwhistle and is focused on relieving traffic around Glossop. In terms of the South Yorkshire side of the A628, roads, roundabouts and junctions are to be improved and additional signals are to be placed to manage traffic more efficiently
- TH stated that it would be far better value for money by making the appropriate investment now by future proofing rather than having to spend significant sums again in the future

Trans Pennine Tunnel

- TH advised that the recent consultation indicated that there could be a possibility that the project could be cut back and has been diluted from a 12-mile plan to a 4-mile plan. The declared reasoning for this is for budget consideration, however TH suggested that public funds are being directed to other projects that do not bring a significant level of GVA like this one does. CW and TH suggested that the group lobby for the 12-mile plan. Forum members were in general agreement
- Gareth Owen (GO) assured the argument by stating that the current issues for the route cause so many problems, it more than justifies the need for significant infrastructure improvement. TH agreed that there were issues that desperately need addressing

- MR advised that he had attended the stakeholder meeting and that there were very few objections including Peak National Park as the plan works for everyone, though felt that Peak National Park officials should have pushed for the programme as it benefits the environment significantly
- AB clarified that there were air quality issues in Langsett though environmental reports had not yet been released
- AD raised awareness of additional plans being proposed by Transport for the North regarding an additional route crossing the Dearne Valley from the A616 across to the M18. It was clarified however that there had been no significant consultation with Local Authorities around this. AD recommended that joined up thinking is needed right now as all these projects converge on South Yorkshire and will bring significant benefit to the region if managed effectively
- CW also stated that pressure relief for the M62 could be beneficial and questioned if this had been considered as part of the consultation around GVA benefits to West Yorkshire
- TH advised that although the infrastructure needs to be in place on either side of the route, it is imperative that the route has resilience for the future as investment will need to be significant. He also stated that it was time we saw a conclusion to the feasibility report for the TPT study as it has been going on for in excess of 5 years now
- CW felt a joint approach on improved rail provision along a similar route is also required as this can also be a challenge and will support the development of the transport infrastructure for the region
- AD reiterated that this is a huge opportunity and it could really pull things together for the region
- TH concluded that there had only been one consultation meeting in this region and that there needs to be more momentum here

Local Motorways

- SB stated that almost all allocated Road Investment Strategy (RIS)1 funding has been applied. RIS2 funding is coming up and bidding for projects commences in September
- SB advised that M1 J33 programme allocated funding is in place and hopefully the Department for Transport are going to give the go ahead for the Parkway and motorway modifications to ensure relief is enabled at the junction. MR clarified the approaches for the programme. SB advised that the J33 service area is still in progress and is regarded to have strategic benefit by Highways England
- SB addressed previous enquiries regarding the 60mph speed restrictions and advised that these implemented to assist in reducing air quality issues. Though these are being addressed, it is not being widely publicised
- CW advised that the approach from M1 J37 north to the west of the Barnsley borough (A628) in the right-hand lane is difficult, particularly at peak times. This is due to no markings on the roundabout indicating the routes when exiting the roundabout onto the dual carriageway heading into town, as the right-hand lane turns right at Pogmoor and does not go straight on into town. If road marking indicated the routes of either lane clearly, this would reduce the dangers of risky lane changes at the last minute.
- CW also advised that the M1 J36 north roundabout heading onto the A61 north through Birdwell is difficult to navigate as it is very tight coming off the M1 north to get into the right-hand lane and really needs the layout adjusting to reduce the possibility of collisions.
- GO queried why there was yellow box markings in the right-hand lane leading from the J33 roundabout onto the centenary way link road, when the road widens to a dual carriageway around 30m after the roundabout exit. MR later clarified after the meeting that the circulatory carriageway adjacent to the Rotherway exit and entrance is a critical congestion point. Consequently, the flow of traffic around this interaction needs to be free as possible, as any backlog at this location on the carriageway would not allow the junction to work efficiently. Given the significant M1 Southbound demand from Sheffield Parkway, the lanes on the circulatory (over the M1 between the northbound on slip and southbound off slip) need to be assigned in the current way (Lane 1 Rotherham, Lane 2 M1S, Lane 3 M1S) to accommodate this flow of vehicles and 'flush' the traffic through the signal phasing. As a result, only one lane can be assigned to Rotherham onto Rotherway on the exit. It should be noted that the proposed improvement at J33 as part of the widening scheme will seek to address this and create a two-lane exit.

Local Transport Issues

Barnsley

- BMBC are focusing on clear airzones at Wakefield Road, Dodworth Road, Pogmoor Road and the A628 at Langsett and are currently attempting to access funds to address issues in these areas
- A Dearne Valley study is taking place to enable bus times to be adjusted to increase efficiency
- A new bus service has been introduced from town to M1 J36 to extend route offerings
- The major Pontefract Road scheme is still in progress and is hoped to be completed by the summer to reduce the traffic issues experienced in the area
- Cheapside, New Street and Albert Street remain closed during major highway infrastructure update
- CW raised that the traffic lights at Eldon Street are still not working effectively and if addressed to could reduce significant congestion
- CW also mentioned that the A635 from Cawthorne to Barugh Green and that the traffic lights are not working effectively and due to the nature of the stretch of road, queuing is creating dangerous situations due to limited visibility at parts of the road

Rotherham

- Interchange work is to start around May Bank Holiday and expected to take no longer than 12 months. Work has already started at Forge Island to accommodate temporary issues caused by the update. MR reminded the group that it is a SYPTTE project and progress will be monitored closely and Sheffield City Region (SCR) have now released funding to improve transport infrastructure
- College road currently in progress with the Department for Transport carrying out works
- A new crossing on the A57 at Anston is set to improve pedestrian provision
- Whiston Crossroads is being looked at due to the build up of traffic through turning traffic
- Traffic lights at Bramley crossroads are to be reviewed to look at easing traffic management
- Focus is also being given to town centre access for Rotherham, updates to follow
- AD mentioned that the new University College Rotherham may increase traffic in the Town Centre when it opens
- MR confirmed that the tram train is expected by September/October and not expecting any further delays, but should watch this space
- MR also confirmed that a clear air study is to take place in the local authority area, and confirmed that the Sheffield Innovation Corridor is the biggest challenge transport-wise for the region

Any Other Business

- AP advised of Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber Connect 4 Lunch event, in conjunction with Connect Yorkshire to present the Vision and Masterplan for Doncaster Sheffield Airport highlighting the future growth plans for the whole airport site. It is due to take place on Wednesday 14th March 12.00 - 14.30 at Barnsley Football Club
- AB commented that they had contributed significant effort to the SCR Transport Strategy with many points BMBC had raised not being covered in the feedback. MR held the same opinion from the RMBC perspective. SB saw the strategy as a continuity project rather than developmental so expected the content it provided, though the rest of the group felt it lacked the required recommendations given the input given from various quarters

Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 18th September from 8.00am, venue TBC.