

Executive

6 October 2022

Report of the Corporate Director of Place
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Transport

HAXBY STATION – UPDATE & NEXT STEPS

Summary

1. This report provides an update on the progress of the Haxby Station project. To take this project forward, Members are asked to note recent developments and delegate authority for a number of matters to ensure that the project remains on target in terms of delivery timescales.

Recommendations

2. Executive is asked to:
 - 1) Note the additional £1.1m funding allocated to the project from government.
 - 2) Note the results of the public consultation, undertaken earlier in 2022.
 - 3) Note the recent application to Round 2 of the government's *Levelling Up Fund*.
 - 4) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member, to submit a planning application for the anticipated future construction of the new station.
 - 5) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member and the Director of Governance (or his delegated Officers), to:
 - i) Undertake such steps as are necessary to commission Network Rail, as our delivery partners, to progress the next stage of development (*GRIP 4 & 5* stages), up to the point of delivery and note that a further report will be brought to Executive to report on

the actual build costs and to ask the Executive to agree to proceed with construction.

- ii) Carry out a procurement to engage a consultant to undertake the required design services to deliver all Highways aspects of the project which are outside the station site and to take such steps as are necessary to award and enter into the resulting contract.
- iii) Carry out a procurement to engage a construction contractor to undertake the required construction works to deliver all Highways aspects of the project which are outside the station site and note that a further report will be brought to Executive to report on the actual build costs and to ask the Executive to agree to proceed with construction.

Reason: To afford City of York Council the best possible opportunity to progress this project in a timely fashion and enable the full delivery of a new rail station at Haxby by early 2024, as mandated by government.

Background

3. A preliminary funding decision was received in November 2020 from the Department for Transport (DfT) indicating an award of £400k of their *New Stations Fund (NSF) / Restoring Your Railway Fund (RYR)* towards a new station at Haxby. This was to enable further development work by delivery partners Network Rail (NwR) to develop outline designs and refine costs. DfT have continued to indicate their strong support for this project and have expressed that they expect to confirm full funding in due course (75% of costs), subject to a satisfactory business case being submitted to the Department for Transport. Upon confirmation of government funding, this will be reported to a future meeting of Executive to seek approval to add this to the budget.
4. At Executive (9 December 2021), Members approved a site at Towthorpe Road as the preferred location for the new station in Haxby, enabling the project to progress to the next stage of development (*GRIP 3*) and presenting the strongest case possible to government for the expected granting of funding to enable full delivery of a new station located at Towthorpe Road.
5. At Executive (7 February 2022) an allocation was agreed within the Capital budget of £4.3m over three years in anticipation of match-funding the government's envisaged grant with a 25% local contribution (of circa £4.0m) in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Director of

Governance. Current estimates for delivery of the project are circa £16m, but this is likely to be adjusted following refinement by NwR in their *Station Proposal Report*, due imminently. Timescales set out by DfT mandate that construction of the new station is required by the end of March 2024.

6. In June 2022 DfT announced that it had awarded a further £1.1m of funding to Haxby Station, subject to the outputs of NwR's forthcoming report, to support the further development of the scheme to the next stage of development by providing further funding from the *Restoring Your Railway Fund*. DfT stated that this scheme '*presented the potential to improve connectivity between Haxby and cities such as York, Leeds and Manchester, and that they looked forward to seeing it developed further*'. This funding is to be provided directly to Network Rail to lead the next stage of work with CYC in progressing the scheme to the required standard.
7. A full public consultation was undertaken 21 April – 15 May 2022 to allow residents to express their views on the initial plans, designs and use of the new station proposed at Towthorpe Road. A thousand leaflets were distributed at key public buildings and shops etc within Haxby, Wigginton and Strensall and social media / press releases directed the public towards an online portal where they could complete a survey on the proposals. Additionally, paper copies of this survey were made available at local libraries and community centres. Community engagement drop-in sessions for members of the public to come speak to the team about the project were also arranged in Haxby and Strensall, which were well attended. Meetings of local Parish Councils were also attended to give the opportunity for local discussion.
8. A total of 1,200 responses were received in total. "Headline figures" from this include:-
 - 81% support the proposal for a station in Haxby (67% *strongly* support); 14% are opposed (8% are *strongly* opposed); and 5% are neutral.
 - 83% say that they would likely use Haxby Station to one extent or another.
 - 74% of participants lived in Haxby or the immediate surrounding villages (i.e. Wigginton, Strensall, Towthorpe and Earswick). 96% lived within the City of York boundary.
 - 78% said that they would use the station for leisure travel (i.e. shopping; visiting families etc); 66% would use it as part of longer

distance journeys (i.e. to London, Manchester Airport etc); 33% would use the station as part of their daily commute.

- 50% said that they might use a future re-routed bus service to travel to/from the station. 33% said that they would not.
- Being able to tick multiple travel options, 57% said that they would likely walk to the new station; 47% said that they may use a bus service; 30% said that they might cycle; and 29% said that they thought they would likely use their private motor vehicle.
- 65% said that opening a station at Haxby meant that they would not need to use their car as much; 53% that they would be able to access Manchester Airport by rail; and 32% that it would allow them to travel to work/study for their commute.
- 70% would be more likely to visit Leeds due to a new station at Haxby; 64% said York city centre; and 63% would be more likely to visit Scarborough as a result.
- There were also a number of comments throughout the consultation with people asking questions, raising concerns or making general comments. The top-most commented-upon themes were:
 - questions about the number of car parking spaces;
 - supportive statements regarding the project;
 - questions over Towthorpe Road as the location;
 - requests for a walking and cycling route from Strensall and/or Towthorpe;
 - concerns over fly-parking and traffic on nearby residential streets;
 - road safety worries and concerns over increased traffic in the area.
- Full details can be seen at **Annex A**.

9. An opportunity arose at a similar time, with government inviting bids to the second round of their '*Levelling Up Fund*' (LUF) for *Transport-orientated* bids. Subsequent to the feedback from the public consultation, specifically the desire for improved walking/cycling routes to the proposed station from nearby villages; and issues surrounding road safety; a decision was made by Executive (16 June 2022) to approve a bid to LUF, which was subsequently submitted on 2 August 2022, titled '*Sustainable transport connectivity to Haxby Rail Station*'. It should be noted that other rail-orientated LUF applications have been submitted by Ryedale, Scarborough and North Yorkshire Councils concerning the York to Scarborough line, so it is hoped that these will all complement one another if successful.

10. This application for LUF monies is for approximately £5m ¹ of government funding (90%) towards a package of works worth approximately £5.5m ², with CYC making up the remaining 10% ³ as is a requirement of the fund – this match-funding already being included within the committed £4m capital funding as detailed in paragraph 5 above. This will be used to augment the new station by improving active travel to neighbouring communities and improving accessibility to and from the local vicinity. The bid includes proposals to improve the sustainable active travel connections in Haxby and Wigginton to improve the onward connectivity beyond those already proposed as part of the main Haxby Station project. Announcements on successful applicants are expected from government before the end of 2022, with successful projects expected to be delivered by 2024/25.

¹ £4,929,522

² £5,477,247

³ £547,725

11. The LUF improvements propose the following interventions:

- A new high quality off-road shared-use path for pedestrians and cyclists, to link Strensall to the new station (potentially adjacent to the Foss; incorporating a new bridge over the river);
- Identification of and improvements to a quiet-trafficked walking and cycling route from Wigginton to the new station (potential new signage; road-crossings; side-road treatments; etc);
- Identification of and improvements to a quiet-trafficked walking and cycling route from central/south Haxby to the new station (potential new signage; road-crossings; side-road treatments; etc);
- Road safety improvements between the new station and Strensall Road. Potential signalisation of the staggered junction of Towthorpe Road, Strensall Road and Towthorpe Moor Lane.
- Additionally, there is some allocation for local bus stop improvements and an increase in the number of EV charging spaces proposed at the station car park.

The proposed LUF improvements are discretionary and as such a successful application is not required for delivery of the main station project. Should the LUF application be unsuccessful, the council would seek to identify transport solutions potentially delivered through alternative funding streams (i.e. Local Transport Plan) to improve sustainable transport routes to the station.

12. Regarding the main Haxby Station project, to ensure the smooth and timely transition to the next stages and ensure that the tight timescales of the programme are adhered to, we now request a number of delegations to the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member. These are in advance of and whilst awaiting future confirmation of full funding for the station project being granted by government, as expected hopefully by the end of 2022.

These delegations are:

13. Undertake all necessary actions to commission Network Rail to deliver the next stages of development, up to the point of delivery.
 - Network Rail are our delivery partners for Haxby Station and as the experts and subsequent owners of the future station, they are best placed to deliver the next stages of the project, as will be required by DfT as part of the expected future grant agreement. Currently NwR are only commissioned for work until the end of this particular stage, the *Station Proposal Report (GRIP 3)*. To ensure the smooth continuation of the project, NwR will need to be commissioned for the next stages '*GRIP 4 & 5*' without delay, which includes detailed design, under an *Implementation Agreement*.
14. Submit a planning application for construction of the new station.
 - The next key milestone following full government funding being confirmed will be securing planning consent for construction of the scheme. A pre-application to CYC's Development Services is forthcoming to identify any immediate issues and work will be ongoing with local stakeholders to hone design, but it is considered prudent to proceed in a timely fashion by submitting a full planning application without delay as soon as possible.
15. Commission consultancy services to design and deliver all Highways aspects of the project which are outside the station site.
 - A number of Highways alterations are required as part of the main station project, such as the entrance (on Towthorpe Road) to the station site; street-lighting; new walking and cycling paths connecting into the station site; parking restrictions etc. These would be delivered by the council (and their contractors) under their highways authority powers.
 - The bid to the Levelling Up Fund concerns Highways improvements, and if awarded by government would again be delivered by the council and their contractors, outside the main station project.

Consultation

16. Full public consultation as detailed in paragraphs 7 – 8 above.

Options

17. There are two options available to Executive:

- 1) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place (in consultation with the Executive Member) to take appropriate steps to immediately commission Network Rail to deliver the next stages of the project; submit a planning application for construction of the new station; and commission consultancy/contractor resources to undertake Highways aspects of the project. These developments can be advanced prior to and whilst awaiting notification of full funding for the project being awarded by government.
- 2) Delay giving any such potential approvals/delegations for further development work on this project until such time as the council have received definitive notification of full funding being granted by government for the station.

Analysis

18. With the delivery of the new station being required before the end of March 2024, as mandated by government (subject to funding being awarded), timescales are already very tight – but still considered deliverable at this stage providing that the project proceeds at pace, without any deferral of key activities. Any delay introduced to the programme may risk government potentially not awarding the expected full funding, or alternatively withdrawing any funding already committed at that stage, thus jeopardising the entire project.
19. To proceed in as timely a manner as possible, the project has sought to rationalise the programme and reduce any potentially lengthy lead-in times, especially for key decision points such as seeking Executive approval for various elements (for example, commissioning; and approval to proceed to planning). As such, it has been considered that the most prudent route through the council's Approvals process would be Option 1 – delegate to the Corporate Director (as detailed in paragraph 17.1 above).

20. Executive may choose to delay giving any such potential approvals for further development work on this project until such (anticipated but currently uncertain) time as the council has received the granting of full government funding. This would prevent the council undertaking any further work at this time but avoid the council incurring any expenditure which may be considered at-risk, should the unlikely situation arise where the government decides not to grant funding to the project.
21. However, this option has a high probability of adversely impacting the programme, pushing out future milestones, and making delivery of the new station by the mandated March 2024 deadline potentially impossible.
22. Recommendation: Executive is recommended to approve *Option 1* – To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place (in consultation with the Executive Member) to take appropriate steps regarding commissioning; procurement; and planning. These developments can be advanced prior to and whilst awaiting notification of full funding for the project being awarded by government. Additionally, Officers will be expected to bring a report to Executive on the outcome of a future procurement exercise prior to entering into any agreements for full construction of the new station.
23. It is considered that this option presents the lowest risk in terms of future potential deliverability, and importantly means that the project can still be delivered within the timescales mandated by DfT, ensuring the strongest case possible to government for the granting of full funding, enabling the full delivery of a new rail station at Haxby by early 2024.

Council Plan

24. The proposal accords with the Council Plan 2019-2023 in specific regard to the following core outcomes of the Plan:

Getting around sustainably – New accessible rail station for the town of Haxby and surrounding villages and suburban area.

Well-paid jobs and an inclusive economy – Provides potential opportunity for residents to access a wider range of jobs within the region.

A greener and cleaner city – More commuting into the city by rail, rather than by private vehicle, reducing pollution and improving air quality.

Implications

25. Financial

The council has already allocated £4.3m within its Capital Programme between 2022 and 2024. Circa £4.0m of this is expected to be *match-funding* (25%) of the expected government grant (of circa £12.0m DfT funding – 75%) towards the project: estimated total cost of £16.0m. £0.3m (£100k per year over three years) is allocated towards ongoing CYC project management costs.

A total of £1.5m grant funding (£0.4m initial grant, plus the additional £1.1m recently announced – as detailed within this report) has already been awarded by government, exclusively and directly to commission NwR to progress development of the project.

Other costs at present are expected to be met by current resources i.e. the allocation within the Council's Capital Programme, and this would include any procurement of external resources to enable the council to progress the project, i.e. consultancy services to undertake design services of Highway improvements, as set out in para 2.5(ii).

Naturally with approval of funding of the project from DfT not yet confirmed, there is always the risk to the council of abortive costs should the project progress to, for example, planning stage prior to the announcement of an award (expected end of 2022). However, with an identified allocation within CYC's Capital Programme, there are funds available to progress the project during this short period (maximum exposure of £100k) and the risk is considered minimal as activity could be immediately halted if required.

The £12m New Stations match Funding is included in the Councils Capital budget (it was added as part of introducing our £4.3m contribution), however there is no assumed contribution from the Levelling Up Funding at this time. Should funding be awarded to the council for the project the capital programme will be amended accordingly.

26. Human Resources

There are no human resources implications.

27. One Planet Council / Equalities

The potential new station would be designed with equalities in mind and fully accessible to all users. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken as part of the planning consent process.

28. Legal

29. *Grant Funding*

It is noted that £1.1 million will be received from DfT by the project. Details are being finalised but the council may be required to enter into a funding agreement with DfT for the funding. If that is the case, the DfT funding will be subject to the UK Subsidy Control Rules, which replaced the previous European State Aid Rules on 31st December 2020. Legal Services will carry out a review in respect of the Subsidy Control Rules to confirm whether any mitigating actions need to be taken prior to entering into the funding agreement.

30. *Agreement with Network Rail*

The Council has entered into a Development Agreement with Network Rail through which certain works have been commissioned. The agreement may need to be varied to add the GRIP 4 and 5 works which Network Rail will now be undertaking.

31. *Procurement*

The procurement processes to engage a consultant and a contractor to undertake required design services construction works will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Legal Services will provide resources to support the procurement process and prepare the relevant contractual documentation.

32. Crime and Disorder

Crime implications will be explored as part of the planning consent process, including a "Designing-Out Crime" exercise on the outline station design.

33. Information Technology

There are no IT implications.

34. Property

The proposed station site is on land already acquired by City of York Council in late 2021 and currently administered by Property Services.

35. Highways

At this stage within the project, highways implications are still being explored and proposals developed. However subject to the project advancing, a full highways impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the planning consent process.

Risk Management

36. The project has already been substantially de-risked by the early acquisition of land, as land assembly was previously considered the greatest risk to delivery of this project within the applicable timescales. It is considered that Executive's delegation to the Corporate Director to progress the project to the next stages will demonstrate to government the council's significant commitment to the project.
37. There is an identified (albeit low) risk to the council that advancing the project beyond its current stage, prior to confirmation of funding of the project from DfT, would potentially result in abortive costs (which would have to be met by the council), in addition to reputational damage, should funding for the project not be forthcoming from government.

Contact Details

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Approved

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Wards Affected: Haxby & Wigginton

*** For further information please contact the author of the report ***

Background Papers:

Executive (16 June 2022):

“Levelling Up Round 2 Funding and UK Shared Prosperity Fund”

Executive (7 February 2022):

“Capital Budget 2022/23 to 2026/27”

Executive (9 December 2021):

“Haxby Station – Site Selection”

Executive (30 September 2021):

“Haxby Station – Update & Land Acquisition”

Annexes:

Annex A: Haxby Station public consultation results, 2022