

Oxfordshire Growth Board 30 November 2016

Autumn Statement 2016

Briefing Note on East-West Rail and Oxford-Cambridge Expressway

Funding Overview

1. A new National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) will be established to provide £23 billion of additional spending to boost productivity. This will include;
 - a. £1.1 billion to reduce congestion and upgrade local roads and public transport
 - b. £220 million to tackle “pinch points” on ‘strategic roads’
 - c. **£27 million to develop an expressway connecting Oxford and Cambridge**
 - d. **£110 million for East West Rail**
2. £1.8bn of Local Growth Fund has been confirmed, of which £683m will be allocated to Local Enterprise Partnerships in the South East, South West and London. Individual allocations will be announced shortly.

East-West Rail (EWR)

3. £100m has been brought forward into Control Period 5 (to 2019) from CP6 (2019-24) “to bring about construction of part of the Western Section of EWR ahead of HS2 in the Calvert area” (where routes and construction of the two projects overlap). Funding also will complete final design work. Note EWR is the only rail scheme nationally to have funding brought forward – supports the view that Oxford to Cambridge is a Government priority.
4. This decision effectively removes the uncertainty of HS2 ‘getting in the way’ (i.e. fear of this scheme happening first so pushing EWR back). Note HS2 is still on track for Royal Assent this year.
5. Network Rail has now been tasked with how £100m will be best used. They are completing their work on three alternative delivery programmes and pricing options before Christmas. This is likely to inform detailed discussion about the programme and delivery mechanisms early in the New Year. A quick decision will be needed as detailed design work is due to commence in February 2017, so everything which affects this needs to be on the table by then.
6. This means the Transport & Works Act Order consultation – which will include events in Bicester and Launton - is now planned to take place in May 2017 (exact dates to be confirmed early in the New Year), with Order submission expected by end of 2017, and a 12 month turnaround for approvals to be obtained (which is tight) to enable construction to start.
7. On the Central Section, the announcement of £10m funding (which is new money) is good news, as it will allow option development and design work, which is already underway, to continue and fund business case work. The process of narrowing down options and understanding benefits / opportunities is going really well (and will support the Western section, by demonstrating it is part of bigger project). On the Eastern Section (Cambridge to Ipswich/Norwich) consultants

Atkins have been appointed to undertake initial 'Conditional Output Statement' work – due to be completed by April 2017.

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

8. The £27m funding announcement has not been broken down into what it would fund, which will no doubt be finalised as part of the scoping of the next stage of work, but the level implies design and options assessment / business case development. This work will help us understand what the options and costs/benefits are for the route as a whole as well as the section around options and what it could mean in terms of new connectivity, options for development, and what it would mean for the existing A34 corridor.
9. The Expressway is very much seen as complementary to East West Rail, but more so if an alignment round the south of Oxford linking to Aylesbury is taken forward, as this would best meet this objective – other options are closer to the EWR route and therefore have a greater risk of 'substitution' of car for rail travel. However this is obviously one of a number of considerations.

Oxfordshire County Council
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