



Transport for the South East Strategic Investment Plan - consultation response

Report by the Director for the Economy

Officer Contact Details

Martin Randall, Director for the Economy

Tel: (01903) 221209

Email: martin.randall@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to report on the publication of the Transport for the South East (TfSE) Draft Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and to provide an opportunity for members of the Sub-Committee to respond to the current consultation on the SIP.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.1. That Members of the Sub-Committee authorise the Council's response to the consultation on the Draft Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) in the following terms:-
- welcome the potential environmental, social and economic benefits that could be delivered from the SIP's emphasis on integrating transport, digital and energy networks, together with a high-quality, reliable, safe, and accessible transport network;
 - recognition in the SIP that achieving the scale of investment needed to reduce carbon emissions in line with national policy

will require fundamental changes to existing funding mechanisms for transport infrastructure;

- the SIP's emphasis on linking regional policy with local initiatives such as those set out in Worthing's Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP).

2.1.2 That members of the Sub-Committee support:

- the SIP's emphasis on transforming east – west connectivity and enhancing east – west corridors to the same level as radial links to and from London;
- the package of place based 'Solent and the Sussex Coast' interventions that would benefit Worthing, including Sussex Coast Rail; Sussex Coast Bus Mass Transit; and Sussex Coast Active Travel packages;
- the specific inclusion in the SIP of a long term highways proposal to resolve the challenges presented by the A27 road in Worthing as part of an integrated approach to planning for transport in the region.

2.1.3 That members of the Sub-Committee:

- recognise that statutory status for Transport for the South East would help to drive delivery of the SIP and empower TfSE to explore funding solutions; procurement options and work with constituent local authorities to leverage funding of the scale needed to deliver major infrastructure projects;
- would welcome the inclusion of additional references in the SIP to Worthing as a strategically significant contributor to the business case for rail and mass transit interventions;
- recognise that whilst the SIP's inclusion of a long term solution to the A27 is welcome, the impact of congestion in Worthing remains a major problem that has an adverse impact on local quality of life and is of regional significance. The SIP's long term proposal should not therefore preclude other bodies such as National Highways, making short and medium term interventions to improve local quality of life that are consistent with the SIP's decarbonisation objectives.

3. Context

- 3.1.** Transport for the South East was established in 2017 as a sub-national transport body supported by the 16 constituent local

transport authorities (unitary and County councils); 46 district and borough councils and a wide range of other stakeholders with an interest in transport strategy. In common with other sub-regional transport bodies, TfSE does not have statutory status, but is supported by the Department of Transport and encouraged to deliver the TfSE **Transport Strategy** (published in 2020).

3.2. TfSE's overall Vision is:sustain

By 2050, the South East of England will be a leading global region for net-zero carbon, sustainable economic growth where integrated transport, digital and energy networks have delivered a step-change in connectivity and environmental quality. A high-quality, reliable, safe, and accessible transport network will offer seamless door-to-door journeys enabling our businesses to compete and trade more effectively in the global marketplace and giving our residents and visitors the highest quality of life. (TfSE Transport Strategy for the South East, 2020)

3.3. The Draft **Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)** for South East England was published in June and is the subject of a consultation period that runs to 12th September 2022. The SIP is intended to provide a framework for investment in strategic transport infrastructure, services, and regulatory interventions through to 2050. It is a regional plan with evidenced support in which partners can link their own local strategies and plans (*diagram below*) and is intended to provide advice to the Secretary of State for Transport to inform investment in the South East.



3.4. The total capital cost of the SIP’s recommendations is in the region of £48bn between now and 2050. The SIP recognises that to achieve this level of investment, existing funding regimes will need fundamental changes and sets out a range of opportunities for a more integrated approach, including tax incremental funding; growth deals; and a ‘beneficiary model’ to secure funding over the long term to support the funding of major infrastructure projects.

3.5. Priorities and benefits

3.5.1. In line with the Transport Strategy, the investment packages set out in the SIP are intended to address 8 investment priorities, including decarbonisation of the South East, to help enable the UK to achieve net zero by 2050 at the latest and to deliver a transport network better able to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environments. The SIP is also intended to enable the South East’s economy and transport systems to adapt sustainably to changing travel patterns and new ways of working and to promote social

inclusion, improve health and wellbeing, and reduce barriers to employment.

- 3.5.2. Significantly, for Worthing, one of the 8 investment priorities is set out as:

Transforming east – west connectivity: enhance our east – west corridors to the same level as radial links to and from London to boost connectivity between our major economic hubs, international gateways (ports, airports, and rail terminals) and their markets.

- 3.5.3. By securing investment in these priority areas, the SIP raises the prospect by 2050 of:

- An additional 20,000 jobs;
- £41bn per annum growth in GVA;
- 1.6 million additional mass transit and ferry trips each year;
- a reduction of 4 million car trips per day.

- 3.5.4. Conversely, the SIP warns that ‘doing nothing is not an option’ on the basis that the transport system will not de-carbonise quickly enough to meet the carbon challenge.

3.6. Intervention packages

- 3.6.1. 8 interventions applicable across the South East are designed to deliver very significant reductions in carbon emissions. This is achieved through reducing overall demand (virtual working), managing demand (road pricing), and making lower-carbon transport options more attractive (new mobility and public transport fares).

- 3.6.2. **At a sub-regional level**, TfSE has worked with a range of stakeholders and technical advisors to develop **24 place-based packages** of complementary, multi-modal interventions.

- 3.6.3. Whilst other package elements such as unblocking bottlenecks on the London-Brighton main rail line are important; the 4 measures of particular significance to Worthing is set out in ‘Solent and the Sussex Coast’ which represents £11.9bn of investment:

Sussex Coast Rail – faster journeys between Brighton and Southampton; more long distance journeys linking Brighton – Portsmouth – Southampton; and additional capacity between Worthing and Brighton). The net result would be 10,000 additional rail trips per day. A detailed aspect listed in the SIP is the removal of the

West Worthing Level Crossing – this is likely to be controversial and would need careful consideration with a suitable alternative access to be provided so that residents and businesses are not disadvantaged.

Sussex Coast Bus Mass Transit – a high quality public transport system (bus based rapid transit based on the ‘turn up and go’ principle) focussing on Brighton & Hove, to extend along the coast into West Sussex with the potential for a reduction of 65,000 car trips each weekday.

Sussex Coast Active Travel – the significant aspect here is the inclusion of the Local Walking and Cycling Improvement Plans (LCWIP) as part of the overall Investment Plan. LCWIP measures are recognised as:

- delivering improvements to the urban realm of the Sussex Coast built up area;
- unlocking active travel and regeneration opportunities; improvements in air quality in urban areas;
- promoting a significant mode shift from car to active travel, with associated health benefits.

Solent and Sussex Coast Highways – the intention here is to consider roads as part of the wider transport picture. Targeted interventions are proposed:

‘to deliver high-quality east – west connections for freight, private and mass transit vehicles that de-conflict local and longer-distance traffic, with the greatest benefit when supporting and supported by public transport improvements.

Of particular interest is the recognition of the need to find a longer term solution to the A27 as it passes through Worthing.

A potential “long-term” solution is the construction of a new stretch of road, much of which would be within a 4-5km tunnel, potentially making it the longest road tunnel in the UK.

For the purposes of the SIP, a cost of around £2 billion is assumed for this scheme, to be delivered between 2045 and 2050, although this figure may vary as it is highly dependent on detailed design, especially if the solution were to involve a tunnel which would have

options for different lengths and configuration (e.g. single or multiple bore).

The SIP acknowledges that the as an SRN scheme, the government-funded National Highways' Roads Investment Strategy (RIS) would be the 'default' funding source for the scheme; but also identifies the potential of new pieces of infrastructure such as tunnels that have a transformational impact on connectivity to be part funded through tolls, the future value of which can be used to support the borrowing needed in to fund such an ambitious scheme.

4. Issues for consideration

- 4.1.** In formulating a response to the consultation on the SIP it is worth acknowledging that this consultation marks a significant change from earlier 'single mode' consultations, notably on the future of the A27. The SIP provides an important opportunity to consider transport in the wider environmental, social and economic contexts and to link initiatives that are part of Worthing's Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan to wider objectives for sustainable travel in the region.
- 4.2.** The significance of the SIP is underlined by the wide ranging partnership that constitutes TfSE. It is important to note however, that the SIP recommendations would be of greater significance were TfSE to be granted statutory status by government and until then, TfSE is only fulfilling an advisory role.
- 4.3.** The SIP offers clear advice that 'doing nothing is not an option' if the South East region is to contribute to national carbon reduction targets and the benefits of active travel are to be realised for its citizens.
- 4.4.** The SIP's place based measures offer potentially significant benefits for Worthing and are consistent with the LCWIP and a focus on improving public realm and helping to promote active travel.
- 4.5.** A bus based mass transit system would complement rail and road highway improvements. Recognition of the contribution that Worthing might make to the business case for a mass transit scheme should be specifically referenced in the SIP. Similarly, the case for strategic rail improvements on the Coastway West route should include specific

reference to Worthing as the largest town in West Sussex and with a growing population.

- 4.6. The inclusion in the SIP of a long term solution to the challenge presented by the A27 through Worthing is welcome; as is the explicit link to a package of other measures which mean that the A27 road infrastructure is not considered in isolation. The inclusion of a case study is also welcome to illustrate that a range of funding measures will need to be considered for a solution as significant and costly as tunnelling infrastructure.
- 4.7. The SIP offers the potential to consider short term improvements for the A27 likely to be proposed by National Highways as part of the national Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) in the context of the longer term option. However, greater certainty over the delivery of a satisfactory long term option is only likely to be secured alongside TfSE gaining a statutory function and status. It should be acknowledged that even allowing for cost, a long term option that doesn't commence until 2045 may seem 'too distant a prospect' for many residents, businesses and other stakeholders who have been campaigning for a solution over so many years.

5. Engagement and Communication

- 5.1. The SIP is the subject of a wide ranging consultation exercise and comments are requested by 12th September 2022.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the consultation response.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. Transport for the South East was established as a sub-national transport body under s102E of Part 5A to the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016.
- 7.2. Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are

exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

- 7.3. s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation.
- 7.4. The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 came into force on 27th June 2019 and increased the UK's 2050 net greenhouse gas emissions reduction target under The Climate Change Act 2008 from 80% to 100%.

Background Papers

- [TfSE - A Strategic Investment Plan for the South East - Consultation Draft](#)

Sustainability & Risk Assessment

The SIP aims to deliver a faster trajectory towards net-zero than current trends, including rapid adoption of zero emission technologies, to help mitigate the impact of climate change. The SIP identifies the potential for an holistic approach to planning for carbon reduction with measurable benefits.

1. Economic

- The SIP explicitly supports sustainable economic growth and unlocking regeneration and growth opportunities where this has been held back by inadequate infrastructure or poor integration between land use and transport planning

2. Social

2.1 Social Value and Equality Issues

- Delivering a more affordable and accessible transport network for the South East that promotes social inclusion, improves health and wellbeing, and reduces barriers to employment, learning, social, leisure, physical and cultural activity for all communities. TfSE's stated objective is to reverse the real terms increase in the cost of public transport compared to motoring.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

- A safe, reliable and accessible transport system with many more opportunities for active travel will help to create a much safer environment for travel.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

- Matter considered and no direct impact identified.

3. Environmental

- Accelerating decarbonisation of the South East, would enable enabling the UK to achieve net zero by 2050 or sooner, and delivering a transport network better able to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environments.

4. Governance

- The SIP is geared toward making the link between national, regional and local policy. It will then have implications for local strategies and plans including the Local Plan and Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP).