



Midlands Connect
Transport | Investment | Growth

Midlands Connect, the Major Road Network and Large Local Majors

**Priority scheme submission to the Department for Transport
Summary report, summer 2019**



Forewords

Maria Machancoses, director, Midlands Connect



There has never been a better time to invest in the Midlands. Our economy is at the forefront of innovation, spanning industries from advanced manufacturing and professional services, to life sciences and agri-tech. Our exports are growing. We are spearheading the green revolution, driving forward advances in battery technology and connected and autonomous vehicles as the country commits to a carbon neutral future. And we are positioned in the very centre of

the nation which must work together more closely and efficiently than ever before as the UK leaves the European Union.

The Midlands, more than any other region, relies on resilient transport networks to prosper. The Major Road Network is a vital new tranche of funding to ensure our towns and cities have the reliable road infrastructure necessary to accommodate their ambitious job creation and house building targets, encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport, and provide better links to our Strategic Road Network and the national and international markets it serves.

The seven Major Road Network and four Large Local Major schemes we've submitted to the Department for Transport each fulfil these criteria. They also consider our environmental obligations. While we must encourage less polluting journey choices by train, it is also incumbent upon us to reduce chronic congestion and the associated harmful emissions it causes.

Our submission harnesses the collective voice of the Midlands, is built on a sound regional evidence base, and follows detailed consultation with our local highways authorities and other partners. Each can be delivered in the next five years. When delivered, our priority schemes will have a transformative and positive impact on the communities they serve.

I would like to thank the Department for Transport for giving Sub-national Transport Bodies like Midlands Connect a leading role in establishing the country's Major Roads Network. Now, we must ensure the Midlands receives the funding allocation it needs and deserves to bring these 11 projects

Jim O’Sullivan, chief executive, Highways England



Highways England operates, maintains and enhances the strategic road network (SRN), 4,300 miles of motorways and ‘A’ roads, carrying 4 million vehicles every day. The SRN has a critical role in the country’s society and economy, enabling business to trade nationally and internationally and providing connections for families and friends. Not only must we continue to improve capacity and flow on the SRN, we must also make the most of the infrastructure we already have and do

more to allow people to link quickly, efficiently and sustainably from their homes and workplaces to motorway junctions or public transport hubs.

The Department for Transport’s newly recognised Major Road Network (MRN) is the solution. It fills a long-overlooked gap between the SRN that we’re responsible for at Highways England, and the local authority-managed roads that most people use to get to work, to school and to manage their day to day lives.

In comparison to the nationally important strategic roads, the business case for investment in regionally important roads has often struggled. It is not a fair comparison, as we need both road networks to allow us to maximise the benefits of investment in road transportation.

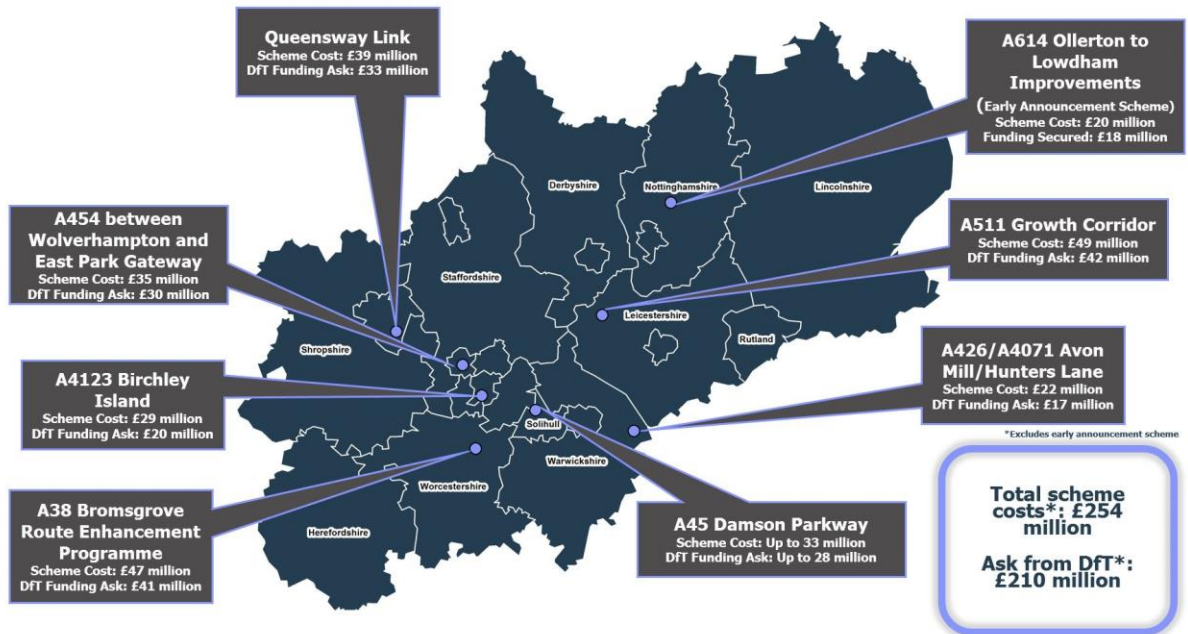
There are hundreds of candidates for this kind of investment across the country. Identifying them and narrowing them down to an easily reviewable shortlist has, no doubt, been a huge task. The process and criteria employed by the expert technical team at Midlands Connect is best practice. It includes a prioritisation framework and attention to detail the rest of the highways industry could use too.

Many of the roads in this report are also important to us at Highways England as the operators of the SRN. They are collectors and distributors for the SRN, as well as providing essential diversion routes as we upgrade the SRN nationwide. The SRN needs more resilience and, when there is a problem, very often the diversion route is barely fit for purpose. The MRN is uniquely placed to make it easier for us all to get around.

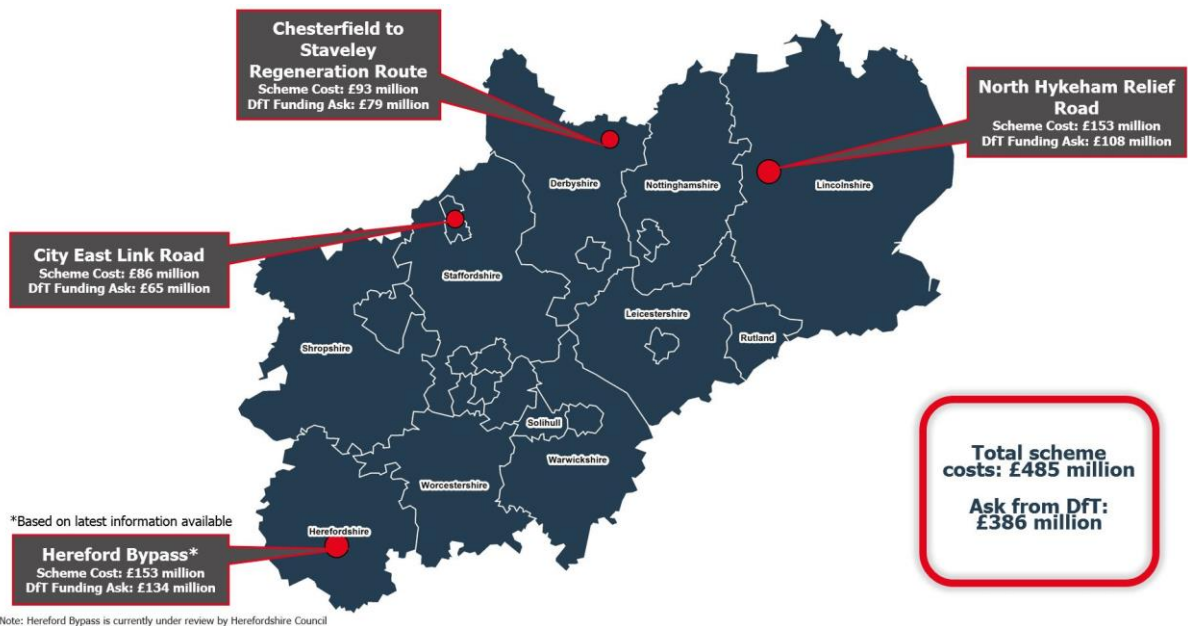
The establishment of the MRN is a welcome new funding stream to support jobs and businesses across the highways supply chain. The MRN and Large Local Majors projects are aligned with and support Highways England’s existing approach. We’re about to embark upon another five-year programme of maintenance, capital renewals, smart motorway upgrades, new schemes and some flagship schemes. Investment in the MRN over the same five-year period will enable businesses of every size in the supply chain to create jobs and plan for the future with confidence.

Regional roads are important, and my view has always been that we need to find more money to fund them, not trade them off against the SRN. Reports like this are further proof that there are great projects out there, which we can all benefit from, just waiting to be given the go ahead, enhancing the value of the country’s overall road network.

Our Major Road Network (MRN) priority schemes



Our Large Local Majors (LLM) priority schemes



What are Major Road Network and Large Local Majors Schemes?

The government's National Roads Fund for 2020-2025 is a record £28.8 billion, and will be spent on upgrades to the Strategic Road Network (SRN), including motorways and major A roads managed by Highways England; and local roads, managed by local highway authorities (LHAs).

The fund includes £3.5 billion for upgrades to local roads, including on the Major Road Network (MRN), a new category of economically important 'A' roads, and Large Local Majors (LLM) schemes, which focus on bigger upgrades to local roads.

Any MRN or LLM scheme looking for funding must satisfy objectives set out by the Department for Transport (DfT):

- Reducing congestion;
- Unlocking housing and economic growth;
- Supporting the SRN;
- Supporting all road users.

The role of Midlands Connect

To ensure funding for the MRN and LLM is targeted where the potential benefits are greatest, the DfT empowered Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) including Midlands Connect to submit ten priority MRN schemes and two to three LLM schemes for their areas. Midlands Connect developed eligibility criteria and consulted comprehensively with LHAs.

MRN schemes must include a funding request to the DfT of between £20-50 million, and LLM schemes a request of more than £50 million. Both MRN and LLM schemes must also have at least a 15% funding contribution from LHAs.

Each scheme's business case must also be sufficiently developed so they can be delivered from 2020-2025. For schemes aiming to start early construction from 2020-2022, a more developed Outline Business Case is required. Schemes aiming to start construction from 2024 have until the end of 2021 to produce an Outline Business Case.

Following detailed consultation and assessment, Midlands Connect submitted **seven MRN schemes** and **four LLM schemes** to the DfT in July 2019 for funding consideration.

Whilst government guidance states that STBs can submit up to 10 schemes for MRN funding and two to three LLM schemes, Midlands Connect emphasised the importance of putting forward a credible programme with strong potential for completion by 2025.

All seven MRN and four LLM priority schemes submitted are ready for investment. The funding request from the DfT to support the delivery of the schemes is in line with what would be expected for a region the size of the Midlands.

The Region's MRN Priorities: our criteria

Guidance from the DfT specified the types of schemes eligible for MRN funding, including:

- Bypasses or new alignments that ease congestion and make journeys quicker, safer and more reliable;
- Missing links – new roads that link existing stretches of the MRN or SRN;
- Widening MRN roads at congestion points or where there is a safety risk;
- Major structural renewals on roads, bridges, tunnels and viaducts;
- Major junction improvements;
- Smart technology, variable message signs and traffic management;
- A package of any of the above improvements.

Midlands Connect rigorously assessed road schemes submitted by local authorities from across the region and shortlisted those that could be delivered by 2025.

Schemes were scored according to Midlands Connect's eligibility criteria, moderated by an independent external advisor, reviewed by local highway authorities and signed off by the Midlands Connect Steering Group and Strategic Board.

The seven MRN schemes most likely to be ready for investment were taken forward for submission to DfT, each with a credible programme of delivery between 2020-2025. If successful in being allocated funding, LHAs would deliver the physical infrastructure and continue to manage the road once the scheme is complete.

The Region's LLM Priorities: our criteria

Midlands Connect was asked by the DfT to identify two or three LLM schemes that could be delivered between 2020-2025, provide value for money and are linked to wider regional priorities and objectives, including economic growth and housing development.

Potential LLM schemes submitted by LHAs were scored and moderated by the Midlands Connect technical team, reviewed by LHAs and signed off by our Steering Group and Strategic Board, which include DfT representatives.

Four schemes each scored similarly and were submitted to the DfT for consideration in July 2019, each with a robust programme for delivery and strong evidence of potential benefits to local areas. If a scheme is successful in being allocated funding, LHAs would deliver the physical infrastructure and continue to manage the road once the scheme is complete.

Funding Requirement

Although the £3.5 billion funding pot for MRN and LLM schemes hasn't been broken down regionally by the DfT, Midlands Connect would expect its geography to receive around a 20% share, or £600 million, based on its population of more than 10 million.

Overall, the seven MRN schemes and four LLM schemes submitted cost a total of £739 million, with £596 million requested from DfT towards their delivery; in line with what Midlands Connect considers proportionate for the region.

Midlands Connect has requested specific regional funding allocations for future MRN/LLM submissions, to ensure local schemes boost the economy fairly across the country.

Striking a fair and equal balance: our recommendations to government

Midlands Connect welcomes the responsibility Sub-national Transport Bodies have been given to compile a regional evidence base and submit priority MRN and LLM schemes which will be taken forward for funding consideration.

However, we have four recommendations to government to improve the process during the second tranche of MRN/LLM funding, from 2025-2030:

- 1. Funding Allocations:** It is vital that regions are given specific funding allocations for future MRN/LLM submissions, to tailor a programme that gives schemes the best chance of success.
- 2. Development Funding:** Local authorities with squeezed budgets find a lack of funding to develop business cases is hampering their ability to bring schemes forward. With a challenging financial landscape for local authorities likely to continue, we recommend that DfT makes funding available between 2020-2025 to allow LHAs to develop schemes ready for the next period between 2025-2030. This is particularly important for smaller councils.
- 3. Review the piecemeal funding approach:** Midlands Connect wants to work with other STBs to review the current five-year funding period approach to make sure we make the most of every penny invested. Like all road improvements, many MRN and LLM schemes will take longer than a five-year funding window to complete. Allocating long-term development funding for councils can help remove artificial boundaries which are currently too constrained to support transformational investment and growth. A longer-term approach helps us all to understand the timescales, costs and risks of new schemes, and gives the construction industry more desperately needed certainty.
- 4. Remove or reduce the MRN funding threshold:** We believe the £20 million lower limit of DfT contributions to MRN schemes prohibits the development of smaller projects that could deliver huge benefits, especially technology driven schemes that don't need big physical infrastructure. We therefore recommend that this lower threshold is either removed or significantly reduced to allow more impactful and deliverable schemes to come forward.

Our Major Road Network Submissions*

Scheme Name	Local Highway Authority	Scheme Development Stage	Estimated Scheme Opening Year	Estimated Capital Cost* (nearest million)	MRN Funding Ask (nearest million)
A4123 Birchley Island, Sandwell	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	Outline Business Case (OBC)	2023	£29	£20
A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme, Worcestershire	Worcestershire County Council	Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)	2025	£47	£41
A426/A4071 Avon Mill/Hunters Lane Improvements, Warwickshire	Warwickshire County Council	SOBC	2025	£22	£17
Queensway Link, Telford	Telford & Wrekin Council	SOBC	2024	£39	£33
A511 Growth Corridor, Coalville	Leicestershire County Council	SOBC	2024	£49	£42
A454 between Wolverhampton and East Park Gateway	Wolverhampton City Council	OBC	2024	£35	£29
A45/Coventry Road/Damson Parkway Junction ¹ , Solihull	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council	SOBC	2026	£33	£28
Total				£254	£210

*An eighth scheme, A614 Ollerton to Lowdham Improvements in Nottinghamshire, isn't included as funding has already been committed. See page 16 for scheme details.

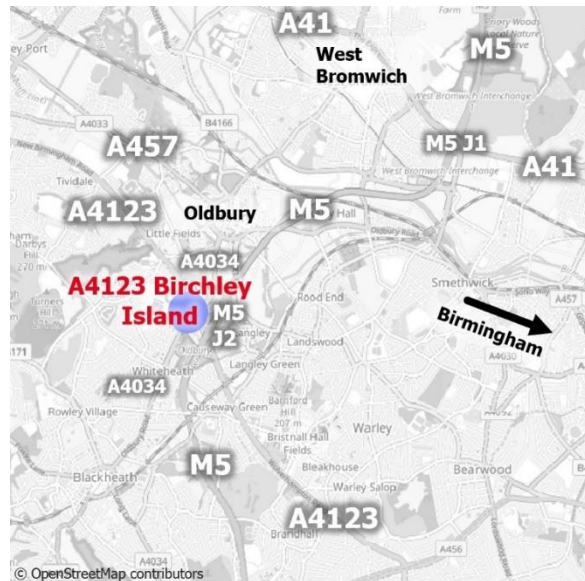
¹ Currently at optioneering stage – figures are based on maximum cost and assumed 15% local contribution of maximum cost

A4123 Birchley Island, Sandwell

Scheme Description

- Provide a “hamburger” style junction with a single lane in both directions through the existing roundabout;
- Widening of the roundabout at all approaches;
- Introduction of signals on the A4034 Churchbridge and A4123 Wolverhampton approaches to make the roundabout fully signalised.

Scheme Cost £29 million	Outline Business Case	DfT Funding Request £20 million
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Why? The need for investment

Reducing congestion and supporting all road users

The scheme will improve journey times and reliability at this extremely busy and well-known junction, which provides direct access to the M5 and a gateway to the Black Country and Birmingham. However, queuing is near constant, ranging from 10 to 70 vehicles at any one time.



Congestion also delays the 26 local bus services every hour that use the A4034 and A4123. Improvements to the junction would increase reliability for buses and integrate better with other transport improvements in the area, including the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension and Birmingham to Dudley Bus Rapid Transit, which will offer direct access to HS2 rail services from 2026.

The scheme also makes it easier for pedestrians to cross the road and includes access for cyclists.



Supporting economic growth

Around 25 hectares of employment sites are located within one kilometre of the junction

and are expected to be developed by 2021. This will increase traffic still further, strengthening the case for urgent improvements to the junction.

Birchley Island is an important gateway to Sandwell Borough, where jobs growth relies on attracting skilled labour from beyond the local authority boundary. Congestion at key locations like Birchley Island is compromising the economic strength of the area and deterring investment. Improving this strategic connectivity opens up more opportunities for businesses, suppliers and employees.

Supporting the Strategic Road Network

Birchley Island provides vital access to the MRN and SRN, especially the M5 at Junction 2. It's also a designated diversion route for the M5 Junctions 1-3 during congestion and incidents.

Highways England made improvements to the M5 Junction 2 exit slip roads in 2013 to prevent queuing on the main carriageway. These improvements, alongside other planned schemes on the M5 and M6, have put additional pressure on Birchley Island and strengthened the case for investment.

A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme, Worcestershire

Scheme Description

A package of improvements on the A38 between B4094 Worcester Road to the south and M5 Junction 4 to the north:

- Increasing junction capacity;
- Widening the main carriageway;
- Signal optimisation;
- New pedestrian crossing facilities;
- Improvements to the existing footbridge and a new walking/cycling bridge.

Scheme Cost £47 million	Strategic Outline Business Case 	DfT Funding Request £41 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting all road users

The A38 separates Bromsgrove town centre from the railway station, making it difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. A new walking/cycling bridge and upgrades to an existing bridge will make crossing easier, alongside new footways, cycleways and signal controlled crossing.



Reducing Congestion

The route has many different functions: a link to the SRN, bypass for Bromsgrove, distributor road within Bromsgrove and a local access route for residents and businesses. This makes the A38 congested and unreliable at key locations, impacting on its role as a strategic link to the SRN.

“Worcestershire has one of the fastest growing economies in the country and this scheme would be another example of the council’s ambition to ensure the county is open for business.”

Councillor Ken Pollock, Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member Responsible for Economy & Infrastructure

Supporting economic growth

The scheme provides a more resilient alternative to the M5 to the South West, a key economic growth corridor in Midlands Connect’s 2017 Strategy, enhancing connectivity to the South West and for local journeys around Bromsgrove, with a population of 99,000.

Supporting the SRN

The A38 is a designated diversion route for the M5 Junction 4-5 and M42 Junction 1-2 during incidents and road works. Both motorways are regularly congested during morning and evening rush hour, where speeds can fall below 40mph and journeys can take three times longer than usual.

Supporting housing growth

More than 10,000 homes and 28 hectares of employment land are expected close to the A38 corridor by 2030 as part of local plans for Bromsgrove and its border with Redditch. Congestion must be addressed to accommodate this planned and future growth.

A426/A4071 Avon Mill/Hunters Lane Improvements, Warwickshire

Scheme Description

A package of works to reduce congestion north of Rugby town centre:

- Enlargement of Avon Hill roundabout;
- Widening all the entries to three lanes;
- Widening or new/improved exits on A426 and A4071 Newbold Road;
- Replace Hunters Lane junction with a new roundabout;
- Short length of dual carriageway at Hunters Lane to connect the two roundabouts and a new River Avon bridge.



Scheme Cost £22 million	Strategic Outline Business Case	DfT Funding Request £17 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth and housing

Rugby is close to Birmingham Airport and East Midlands Airport and is well connected to London and Birmingham by rail, driving housing and jobs growth in the town. Multinational firms Gap, Rolls Royce and Cemex have bases in the borough.

Rugby Borough Council's Local Plan includes 12,400 new homes, 110 hectares of employment land and 8,000m² of retail space by 2031. Several of these sites are close to the A426 Leicester Road corridor. Without these junction improvements there's a concern that the road won't be able to cope with the extra traffic and a risk that developments won't be granted planning permission.



"We look forward to working with Midlands Connect and the Department for Transport to develop the Full Business Case for the scheme and hope to see it implemented as soon as possible."

Councillor Jeff Clarke, portfolio holder for transport and planning, Warwickshire County Council

Reducing congestion



Long queues on approaches to Avon Mill lead to unreliable journey times and creates a major bottleneck on the MRN. If improvements aren't made, more traffic will divert on to less suitable routes and its function as an MRN corridor will be compromised.

Supporting all road users

The scheme includes a new segregated foot and cycle way and a bridge parallel to the existing River Avon bridge. Crossings on the A426 Leicester Road will also be improved. The scheme completes a missing link in Rugby's Cycle Network Plan, giving cyclists better access to Rugby town centre and nearby Avon Valley School.



Supporting the Strategic Road Network

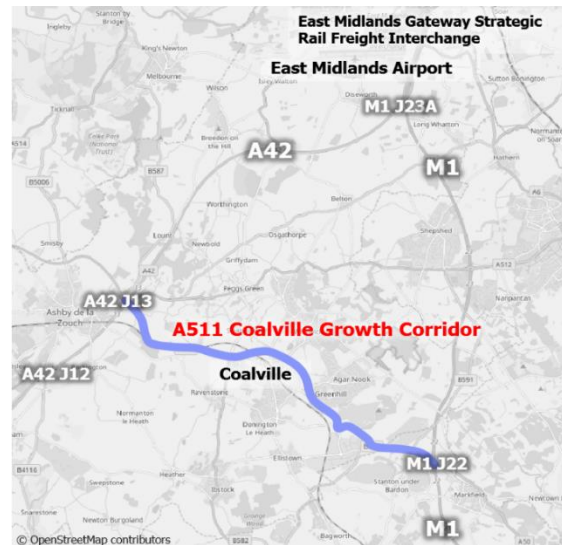
The scheme will improve access to the M6 at Junction 1 and the M45/A45 and wider access to the M1 and A5.

A511 Coalville Growth Corridor, Leicestershire

Scheme Description

- Junction improvements at nine locations between A42 Junction 13 near Ashby-de-la-Zouch to M1 Junction 22;
- Localised widening;
- A new link road, connecting the A511 to Bardon Link Road, creating a new north-south link across Coalville.

Scheme Cost £49 million	Strategic Outline Business Case	DfT Funding Request £42 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

The A511 is both a local route through Coalville towards Leicester and an access route for freight traffic, located as it is at the centre of the UK logistics and distribution network. Unreliable journey times cause delays for freight traffic and major local employers including Amazon and Bardon Hill quarry.

North of the corridor, the M1 and A42 provide access to East Midlands Airport, the UK's largest pure cargo airport. Its cargo operation is growing and the UK's largest Strategic Rail Freight Interchange next to the airport is nearing completion. Improving the A511 corridor would support this growth and provide an alternative to the A42 and M1.

Improvements to the A511 are essential in advance of current HS2 proposals for a construction compound at A42 Junction 13, as traffic will be diverted to the A511 during the construction period. Failure to improve the A511 in time would mean the Coalville Transport Strategy can't be delivered until 2035.

Supporting housing growth

Improvements to the A511 Growth Corridor will increase access to thousands of new homes and new employment sites planned around Coalville. The growth corridor is one of five identified in Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnerships' Strategic Economic Plan, with 5,275 homes and 25 hectares of employment land possible along the corridor, if it receives proper investment. 3,500 homes are already committed to the south east of Coalville.

Supporting all road users

There is an air quality management area for Nitrogen Dioxide along the corridor which is caused by emissions from vehicles queuing at junctions. Reducing these queues would cut emissions and improve air quality.

"Coalville is at the heart of a rapidly growing logistics network, and Amazon is already here. Our proposals will help congestion and bus journey times, as well as support the M1 and M42 as a major gateway to East Midlands Airport"

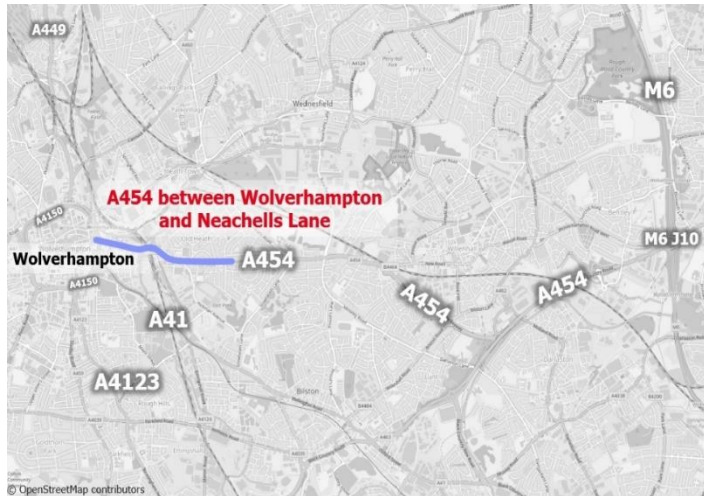
Cllr Blake Pain, lead member for environment & transport, Leicestershire County Council

A454 between Wolverhampton and East Park Gateway

Scheme Description

Significant improvements from Wolverhampton city centre eastwards towards the M6:

- Phase 1: conversion of a section of Walsall Street and Lower Walsall Street to one-way (westbound);
- Phase 2: carriageway widening and a new junction at Hickman Avenue.



Scheme Cost £ 35 million	Outline Business Case 📄	DfT Funding Request £30 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth and housing

The A454 is one of the main routes into Wolverhampton, serving residents, businesses and freight. It is part of two designated regeneration corridors in the Black Country, and improvements will support the new Canalside Quarter and Royal Wolverhampton developments. The scheme is important to make the Canalside development, one of the first “Black Country Garden City” sites, fully accessible.

The A454 corridor is also the spine of the mixed-used East Park Gateway Area, earmarked for 125 hectares of employment land and 1,030 homes.

A marked change in the Black Country highway network is vital to attract and retain businesses and accelerate these new developments.

Supporting the Strategic Road Network

The A454 provides a direct link between the Black Country and the M6 at Junction 10, with onward access to the M5, M42 and M54. Improving this corridor will maximise the benefits of the M6 Junction 10 improvements which are currently under construction.

Supporting all road users

The scheme includes segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, encouraging safer, more sustainable travel along the corridor. The work also improves access to Wolverhampton city centre, including the railway station which is undergoing a major redevelopment.

The scheme also falls within Wolverhampton Air Quality Management Area, so by reducing congestion and providing better walking and cycling routes, the scheme will improve air quality for almost 3,000 homes.

“Businesses in the Black Country are renowned for exporting world class products around the globe, so at a time of increased uncertainty, we must focus on the areas that we are in control of, including improving infrastructure. Birchley Island and the A454 provide crucial links with key routes round the Black Country, but are also frustratingly renowned pinch points.”

Corin Crane, Chief Executive, Black Country Chamber of Commerce

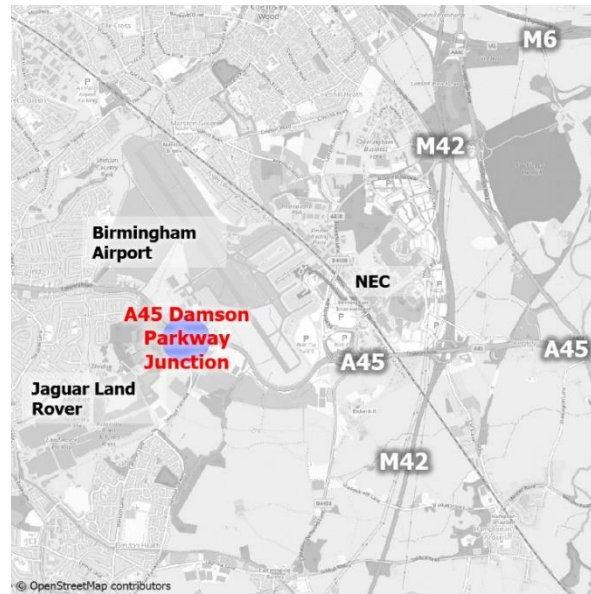
A45 Damson Parkway Improvements, Solihull

Scheme Description

Improvements to a key junction close to Birmingham Airport. Options being considered include:

- Upgrading existing signals;
- Conversion to a roundabout;
- Smaller roundabouts/gyratory.

Scheme Cost £ 5 - 33 million <i>Option dependent</i>	Strategic Outline Business Case 	DfT Funding Request Up to £28 million <i>(Option dependent)</i>
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

Damson Parkway is the nearest junction to Birmingham Airport's passenger terminal, sits next to its main cargo entrance, and is part of the main public transport route to the airport. The junction is also close to the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham Business Park and is the main access point to Jaguar Land Rover's Solihull factory, forming part of the main route between the site and the M42.

Birmingham Airport is the airport of choice for people in the West Midlands, serving 13 million passengers in 2017, making it the third busiest outside London, generating £1 billion a year for the region's economy.



The airport has ambitions to increase passenger numbers to 18 million by 2033 as part of a £500 million expansion plan, bolstered by the airport becoming the first to be HS2-connected in 2026. This will

dramatically enlarge its catchment area and generate substantial numbers of new jobs both at the airport, on development sites around it and the HS2 Interchange station.

Improvements to A45 at Damson Parkway will be essential to make sure access to the airport from Birmingham and Solihull is efficient.

Supporting the Strategic Road Network

Damson Parkway junction has an important role in supporting the M42 during incidents and roadworks. The M42 regularly suffers from low average speeds and longer than expected journey times. Improvements to the M42 Junction 6 are currently planned by Highways England and there's a risk that Damson Parkway could become a bottleneck if congestion issues aren't resolved.

Supporting all road users

The scheme provides an opportunity to improve poor cycling and pedestrian access at the junction. Two Sprint bus routes are also planned to pass through the junction.

Queensway Link, Telford

Scheme description

- A new road connection between the M54 and A5/A443, providing a faster connection to the M54 Junction 5;
- Avoids vehicles travelling between the M54 and A442 having to exit/enter at M54 Junction 5 and use unsuitable alternatives such as A5 Rampart Way or other local roads to access the A442 Hollinswood Interchange.

Scheme Cost £ 39 million	Strategic Outline Business Case	DfT Funding Request £ 33 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

Nationally important employers such as Epsom, Ministry of Defence Donnington, Lyreco and Muller are based in Telford, with Jaguar Land Rover’s engine plant close by at M54 Junction 2. Better local and regional connections is therefore vital for these employers and their supply chains to thrive.

Queensway Link was included in a 2010 plan to improve transport links alongside the regeneration of Telford, to help reduce congestion at the M54 Junction 5 and reduce traffic through the town centre by directly connecting the M54 and A442.

Supporting housing growth

Around 2,700 new homes could be successfully delivered if the Queensway Link is completed, towards a total of 17,820 needed by 2031 as set out in Telford & Wrekin’s local plan. This new link will improve access to and from new housing sites, such as Priorslee Urban Extension.



Reducing congestion

Queensway Link will help to reduce queues and delays at Forge Roundabout and Hollinswood Interchange, and discourage traffic from exiting the M54 at Junction 6 and using unsuitable local roads to avoid congestion. Traffic also uses town centre roads like Colliers Way and Priorslee Avenue to avoid congestion on A5 Rampart Way, both of which aren’t suited to heavy traffic flows.



Supporting the Strategic Road Network

Queensway Link directly connects the Major Road Network to the Strategic Road Network, Telford town centre and the wider borough.

M54 Junction 5 is a designated diversion route for M54 between Junctions 4 and 7. This scheme helps improve the resilience of Telford & Wrekin’s road network to help meet its ambitious economic growth targets.

A614 Ollerton to Lowdham Improvements, Nottinghamshire

Early announcement funding secured

In summer 2018, DfT asked STBs including Midlands Connect to put forward schemes that could be delivered early in the MRN period (2020-2025) and therefore needed an earlier funding decision.

Midlands Connect submitted schemes including the A614 Ollerton to Lowdham, and in October 2018, DfT awarded £18 million to Nottinghamshire County Council.

Scheme Description

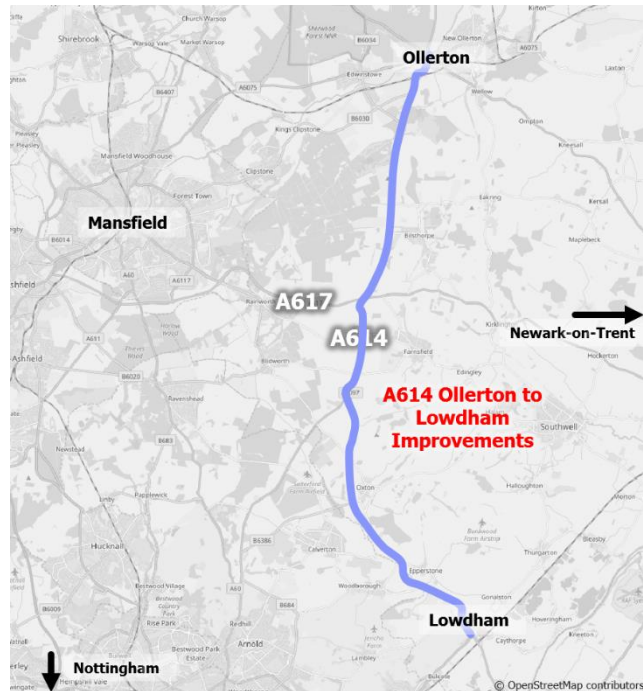
Improvements to six junctions along the A614 and A6097 between Ollerton and Lowdham:

- Enlarging Ollerton roundabout with wider approaches;
- Adding signals to Mickledale Lane and Deer Lane junctions in Bilsthorpe;
- Widening A614 approaches to White Post roundabout;
- New roundabout at A614/A6097 Warren Hill junction;
- Enlarging Lowdham roundabout with new approach lanes on A612 from Burton Joyce and Southwell.

Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic and housing growth

The scheme improves east-west connectivity between Worksop, Mansfield and Newark, and north-south connectivity between Nottingham, Worksop and the M1. The scheme will also make it easier for people in Nottinghamshire



towns to access jobs at growth sites including Thoresby Colliery, Edwinstowe (250,000ft²) and Bingham (15.5 hectares). The scheme also helps mitigate expected increases in traffic generated by new housing developments at Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Bingham.

Reducing congestion

Rush hour congestion is common and queues of 120 vehicles have been recorded at the Ollerton Roundabout, the worst performing of the junctions planned for improvement. Improving the junctions will reduce delays and congestion.



“Nottinghamshire County Council has worked hard with colleagues in Midlands Connect, together with invaluable support from local MPs Ben Bradley and Mark Spencer to press the government for this major new investment...this funding will open up fantastic new opportunities for the county, bringing new jobs, housing and infrastructure to local communities and businesses.”

Councillor Kay Cutts, Leader, Nottinghamshire County Council

Our Large Local Majors Submissions

Scheme Name	Local Highway Authority	Scheme Development Stage	Estimated Scheme Opening Year	Estimated Capital Cost* (£millions)	LLM Funding Ask (£millions)
North Hykeham Relief Road	Lincolnshire County Council	OBC	2026	£153	£108
Chesterfield- Staveley Regeneration Route	Derbyshire County Council	SOBC	2025	£93	£79
City East Link Road	Stoke-on-Trent City Council	SOBC	2025	£86	£65
Hereford Bypass ²	Herefordshire County Council	SOBC not submitted	2024	£153	£134
Total				£485	£386

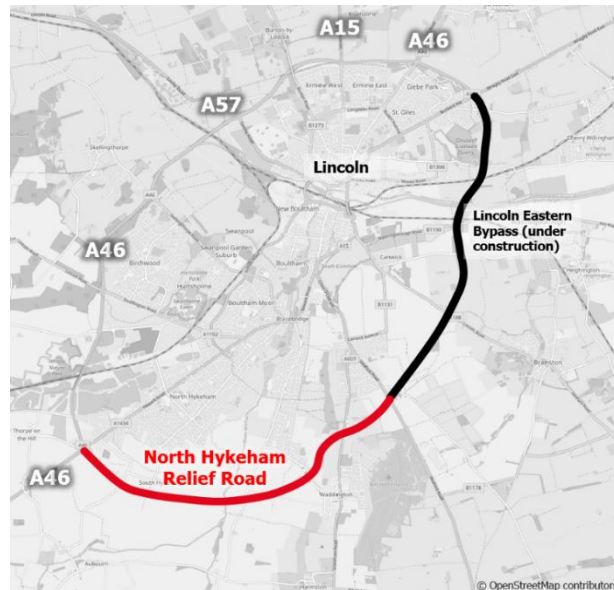
² Following a change in administration, Herefordshire Council is reviewing the Hereford Bypass and Southern Link Road to determine next steps. A further decision will be made before the end of 2019.

North Hykeham Relief Road, Lincolnshire

Scheme Description

- A new link to the south of Lincoln, connecting the A46 in the west to the A15 Lincoln Eastern Bypass, which is currently under construction;
- Includes four new junctions and completes the orbital ring road around Lincoln.

Scheme Cost £ 153 million	Outline Business Case	DfT Funding Request £108 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

The new route would improve access to ports at the Humber and Felixstowe, so vital to the Midlands and UK's export economy, with 95% of all exports travelling by sea. The existing A46/A15 is the main alternative to the A1 north towards the Humber ports, but is regularly congested, especially around Lincoln.

Lincoln is also affected by holiday traffic travelling to the Lincolnshire coast. Any incidents on the A46, A15 and A158 can cause major disruption because of the lack of alternative routes. A new route would therefore support Lincolnshire's tourism economy.

The scheme will also support five hectares of new employment land due to be delivered by 2036.

Supporting housing growth

There are plans for a 50% increase in the number of homes in Lincoln by 2036. Without this scheme, these targets will be difficult to reach, and it won't be possible to deliver the 2,000-home South West Quadrant housing development.



Supporting the strategic road network

The route would provide direct access to the A46 to the south west of Lincoln and offer an alternative north-south and south-north route from the A46. Midlands Connect is prioritising upgrades to the wider A46 corridor after identifying it as one of the country's most important trade routes. This scheme will help improve the resilience of the A46 to the west of Lincoln as part of a 20 year strategy to transform the route along its 155 mile length.

Supporting all road users

Congested routes around Lincoln leads vehicles to use smaller rural routes instead, causing noise, pollution and access problems for residents. This new high-standard route would alleviate some of these diversions.

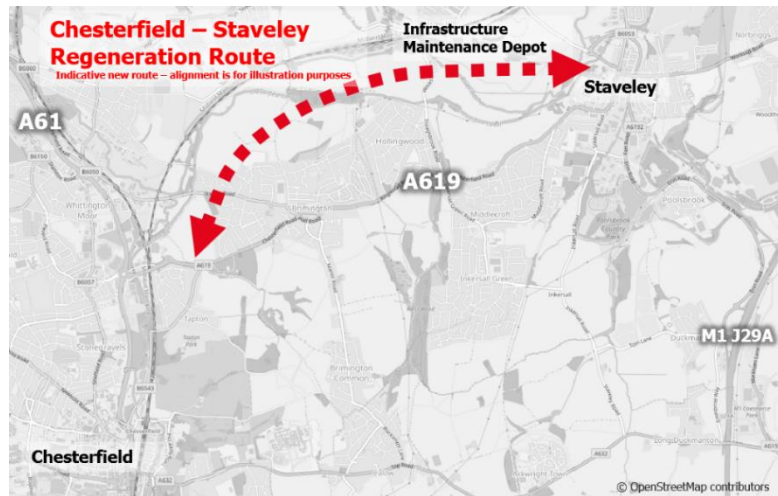
"We're glad to have Midlands Connect's support in pushing this project through and ensuring the region gets its fair share of the £3.5 billion investment pot available over the next five years"

Councillor Martin Hill, leader of Lincolnshire County Council

Chesterfield to Staveley Regeneration Route, Derbyshire

Scheme description

- New single carriageway, approximately 5.7 kilometres long, connecting the A619 north of Chesterfield town centre to the A6192 and A619 at Staveley;
- Alternative route to the existing A619, a single carriageway with variable speed limits (30/40mph) connecting Chesterfield to the M1.



Scheme Cost £ 93 million	Strategic Outline Business Case 📄	DfT Funding Request £79 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

The regeneration of the Staveley Works Area following the decline of the mining, iron and steel industries is already a top priority for Derbyshire County Council. The area has already been invested in and it's part of a regeneration corridor in the Chesterfield local plan.

The new route is critical to the North Derbyshire Growth Zone with 5,700 new jobs earmarked in the Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor Area Action Plan.

The route also provides access to the proposed HS2 Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley, integral to Midlands Connect's priority of maximising the opportunities presented by HS2.

Regionally, the route will be an important connection to Derby and Nottingham to the south and the Peak District to the north.

Supporting new housing growth

The route will support 1,800 new homes through the Area Action Plan.

Supporting all road users

An Air Quality Management Area was designated in Brimington due to congestion on the A619 during rush hour. Removing traffic from the A619 will improve air quality.

The new route includes new crossing facilities and bridleway improvements for cyclists and pedestrians, and real time passenger information for public transport.

Moving traffic from the A619 to the new route will make the five regular bus services that use the A619 more reliable, encouraging more people to use public transport.

Supporting the Strategic Road Network

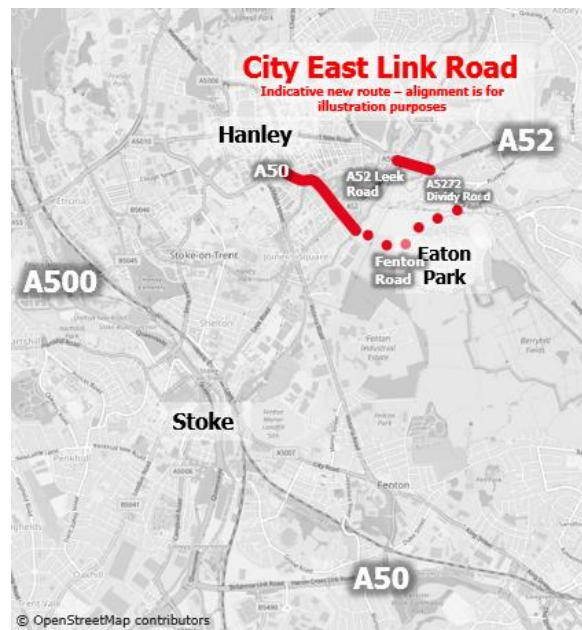
The existing A619 forms a corridor between the A61 and M1 Junction 30, which is a designated diversion route during incidents on the M1 Junction 29 to 30. The new, higher standard route would be another, more reliable alternative during disruption on the M1.

City East Link Road, Stoke-on-Trent

Scheme Description

- A new link to the south east of Hanley, with junction improvements, between A52 Leek Road and A5272 Dividy Road;
- Southwards spur to Eaton Park housing estate and Fenton Park industrial estate.

Scheme Cost £ 86 million	Strategic Outline Business Case	DfT Funding Request £65 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Enterprise Partnership has identified better connectivity as important to improving the overall attractiveness of the area for investment. The scheme would provide better access to employment sites in the city.

Reducing congestion

Existing routes such as the A50, A52, A5008 and A5272 suffer from significant congestion and delays. This new route will relieve congestion at critical pinch points, particularly where the A50 meets the A500. This will help to improve air quality and the noise impact of traffic. Stoke-on-Trent has been an Air Quality Management area since 2006 and is under Ministerial Direction to submit a plan to improve air quality by the end of 2019.



Supporting the Strategic Road Network

Journeys on the A50 can take three times longer than expected at peak times, with average speeds below 40mph. The scheme would support the A50 between Meir

Interchange and Sideway Junction (A50/A500) and the A500 between Sideway and City Road by providing a more reliable diversion route during incidents and roadworks on the A50 and A500.

Supporting all road users

The scheme will lead to significant reductions in bus journey times using the Bucknall Road corridor as other vehicles divert to the new link road. The scheme includes new footpaths and dedicated cycle facilities, creating a direct link to the city centre from employment and residential areas to the south and east of the city.

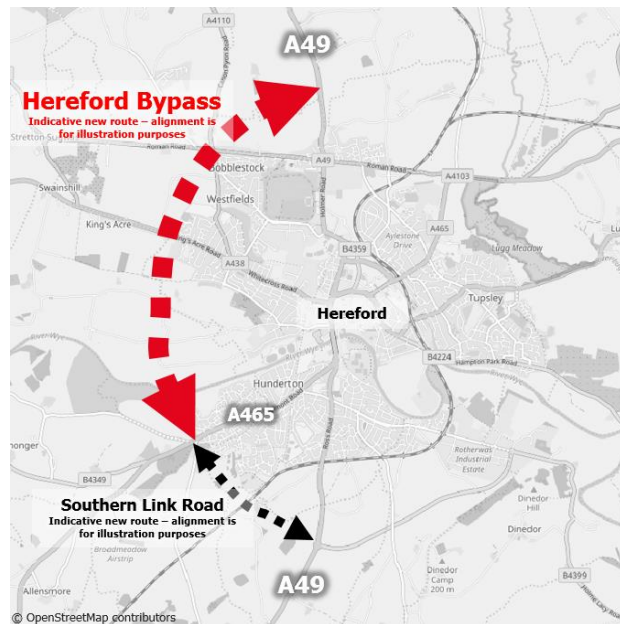


Hereford Bypass, Herefordshire*

Scheme description

- A new route to travel between the north and south of Hereford, bypassing the town and connecting the A465 to the south west, with the A49 to the north;
- Tied in to the Southern Link Road, which would connect the A49 to the south of Hereford with the A465.

Scheme Cost £ 153 million	Submission to be confirmed	DfT Funding Request £134 million
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Why? The case for investment

Supporting economic growth

Highways England has identified the bypass as essential to deliver the Three Elms employment site which, alongside the Hereford Enterprise Zone, could create 4,000 new jobs. The development of the enterprise zone is currently restricted because of the lack of capacity on the A49 through Hereford.

Supporting housing growth

The Local Plan Core Strategy includes 3,250 new homes by 2031, without the Southern Link Road. An extra 1,500 homes are possible with the Southern Link Road, with the remaining 1,750 relying on the delivery of Phase 2 of the Hereford Bypass (this submission). Post 2031, another 4,300 homes can be delivered but only with the full bypass in place.



Supporting the Strategic Road Network

The bypass connects to the existing A49 which is part of the SRN. The bypass is likely to become part of the SRN and a diversion route for the existing A49 trunk road through Hereford. The A465 to the south west, which the bypass could connect to, is currently a diversion route for the existing A49 to the south.

Supporting all road users

The Hereford Transport Package of which the bypass is part also includes improvements to walking, cycling, bus and public spaces to give residents more choice about how they travel. Taking traffic off the A49 through Hereford will reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality.

*Following a change in administration, Herefordshire Council is reviewing the Hereford Bypass and Southern Link Road to determine next steps. A further decision will be made before the end of 2019.

Next steps

We are urging the government to allocate funding for shortlisted schemes as soon as possible to ensure their smooth delivery. Midlands Connect will not be the delivery body for any of the prioritised schemes submitted to the government, if they are successfully awarded funding.

As the owners and operators of the roads, local highways authorities will continue to develop the schemes and, if successful, deliver the physical infrastructure to make them happen.

Midlands Connect will continue to make the case to the DfT to provide early development funding to allow local authorities to develop potential MRN schemes for the next funding period (2025-2030). This will ensure there is a wide pool of potentially deliverable schemes to consider in future.

An MRN Technology Strategy is also being developed to identify pilot schemes that could harness innovation across several local authority areas.

It is also vital to look forward to the next funding period and identify a comprehensive pipeline of schemes to ensure those that are pursued benefit our economy, housing needs, other road users, and the Strategic Road Network.



Glossary

Major Road Network (MRN): a new category of strategic local 'A' roads – schemes on the Major Road Network require a DfT funding contribution of £20-50 million.

Large Local Majors (LLM): bigger schemes to improve local roads, which could include routes on the Major Road Network, requiring a DfT funding contribution of over £50million.

Strategic Road Network (SRN): motorways and major 'A' roads, managed by Highways England.

Local Roads: managed by local highways authorities.

Local Highways Authority (LHA): An organisation, usually a county council or unitary local authority, responsible for the development and maintenance of local roads within its boundary (ie. roads not under the auspices of Highways England).



Midlands Connect

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