

CABINET
2 NOVEMBER 2017**KIDDERMINSTER RAILWAY STATION**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Dr K A Pollock

Relevant Officer

Director of Economy & Infrastructure

Local Member

Mr N Desmond and Mrs F M Oborski

Recommendation

1. **The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy & Infrastructure recommends that Cabinet:**
 - a) **notes the progress to date and the delivery of the Kidderminster Station scheme;**
 - b) **delegates authority to the Director of Economy and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure, to award a contract and associated agreements to deliver the scheme.**

Why are these decisions important?

2. As one of the fastest growing economies in the country, Worcestershire is truly open for business. Record investment is happening in road and rail infrastructure, unlocking key employment sites and providing vital congestion busting schemes in times of rapidly increasing housing needs.
3. The decisions are required to successfully progress and deliver the defined Kidderminster Station Scheme.

Background

4. Kidderminster Railway Station is located one kilometre to the east of Kidderminster town centre towards the top of the A448 Comberton Hill. The station shares its forecourt with the Severn Valley Railway station which is a major tourist attraction and important generator of income for the Wyre Forest economy. The surrounding area is a mix of commercial and residential use.

5. The station is on the Oxford, Worcester, Wolverhampton railway line and services are currently provided by London Midland, north to Birmingham via Cradley Heath and south to Worcester via Droitwich and Stourbridge. In addition, Chiltern Railways provide peak services to London.
6. The scheme provides a strategic fit with both national, Department for Transport (DfT) Objectives, and local policy. It supports the overarching Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) objectives of economic sustainability and growth, value for money and deliverability, is specifically included in the emerging Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) document and detailed as a priority project within the Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan.
7. The scheme will improve accessibility to the Wyre Forest for employment, health, education, leisure, retail and tourism including the Severn Valley Railway which is an important regional tourist destination.
8. The scheme is being project managed by SLC Rail on behalf of Worcestershire County Council with support from Wyre Forest District Council, Network Rail, London Midland, Chiltern Railways, the Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster Railway Museum, local bus operating companies and local businesses.
9. The budget for the scheme is £4.3 million; with the funding sources consisting of Growth Deal Funding of £2.5 million from the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) and Growth Deal Funding of £1.8 million from the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise (GBSLEP).
10. In 2016 patronage through Kidderminster station is estimated to have totalled 2.2m journeys. This figure is derived from the rail industry (LENNON) data which is based on individual station to station ticket numbers.
11. Growth in patronage has been forecast using the industry standard model, the Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook. This model reflects general growth in demand for rail travel, and also includes specific growth factors associated improvements in facilities, such as those which would be delivered by his scheme.
12. Growth is forecast over a 15 year period to a design year, 2035, and thereafter patronage is assumed to remain constant for the remainder of the 60 year appraisal period.
13. A range of forecasts have been prepared, with a Low (background) Growth Scenario showing a rise in annual throughput to 3.1m journeys per annum in 2035. The High (background) Growth Scenario has 4.2m journeys per annum in 2035.
14. This scheme would replace Kidderminster's inadequate railway interchange with a new facility that will:
 - Provide a quality interchange,
 - Provide a new station building double the current size with modern fit for purpose facilities such as passenger seating area, retail/café unit, passenger toilets;
 - Improve the station forecourt layout to reduce conflicts;
 - Improve access for cars (parking and "kiss and ride"), cyclists, pedestrians and taxis;

- Provide upgraded bus stops on Comberton Hill;
- Improve facilities for passengers with disabilities or for those who experience difficulty using the existing railway station facilities;
- Accommodate future passenger growth;
- Support economic growth; and
- Represent very high value for money.

15. The redevelopment and revised layout of Kidderminster Railway Station is made up of the following six distinct work packages:

- Replace the station building with a new, bigger higher quality building containing improved facilities for passengers and operators;
- A new station forecourt layout with formalisation of "kiss and ride" and taxi rank and a new road layout, with no loss of parking. Parking to be kept under review, however this is outside of the remit and financial envelope of this scheme;
- Upgrade of bus stops on Comberton Hill to provide an improved bus-rail interchange;
- Installation of a signalised crossing at the junction of the A448 Comberton Hill and Lea Street;
- Improved pedestrian access and complete the enhanced accessibility to the station; and
- Gateway access to Severn Valley Railway tourist attraction.

Business Case

16. The Business Case for the scheme shows the Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) is 4.81 for the Low Growth Scenario, which places the scheme in the Very High value for money category. The BCR is 13.4 for the High Growth Scenario. The Low Growth Scenario is based on Network Rail's Long Term Planning Process, Regional Urban Market Study which forecasts passenger annual compound growth as 1.66%. However, for the last five years of data presented, the compound growth achieved at Kidderminster station is 3.35% per annum, hence we adopted this figure to develop the High Growth Scenario. The quantified benefits used in the economic assessment do not include any wider economic impacts, for example resulting from increased tourist travel into Kidderminster by rail.

17. The business case does include an assessment of the wider economic impact, including improved labour market balance leading to an increase in productivity and increases in economic output valued at £2.4m per annum by 2040. This would lead to increased aggregate wages of around £320,000 for Kidderminster residents, which could lead to increased expenditure in the local economy, and increased visitor numbers, especially at the Severn Valley Railway, leading to £196,000 per annum economic output within the visitor economy of Kidderminster.

18. The scheme business case received Conditional Approval at the Local Transport Body meeting in March 2017, and is currently completing Single Option Development phase (Network Rails GRIP 4). This work is being undertaken by Mott MacDonald.

Scheme Progress

19. Work to design the station building and forecourt is underway. This includes all deliverables for Network Rails GRIP 4 stage gate, specifically engineering and architectural designs, environmental BREEAM assessments and diversity impact assessments.
20. Work is continuing with the highways detailed design, the scope of which includes a new pedestrian crossing and bus shelters on Comberton Hill.
21. Meetings have been held with all key stakeholders to ensure the scheme scope and requirements are understood and suitably addressed. A well-received public information event was held on 12 July 2017.
22. Procurement strategy for the delivery phase (equivalent to Network Rails GRIP 5-8) recommends a design and build contract utilising Form of Contract NEC Option A. To maintain programme the procurement of this would need to take place to enable award of the contract in Spring 2018.
23. The current timetable for delivery of the scheme, if approved, is as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| GRIP 5-8 Contract Award | Spring 2018 |
| Start on site (Highways) | Summer 2018 |
| Start on site (Rail) | Autumn 2018 |
| Complete site works | Spring 2019 |
| Project Close | Summer 2019 |

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

24. Minor land transfer between Network Rail and the the Council as Highways Authority is required for the bus shelter which is being located off public highway onto embankment land currently owned by Network Rail.
25. In November 2015, Council approved the addition of £4.3M for Kidderminster Railway Station to the Capital Programme. Funding for the scheme is via Local Growth Funding.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessments

26. The scheme provides an improved public transport interchange and accommodates for future growth demand of the railway station encouraging less reliance on car use.

Equality and Diversity Implications

27. As the scheme is predominantly a rail scheme, the project is obliged to adhere to Network Rail's Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) process which dictates submission of the assessment to Network Rail's Built Environment Access Panel for review. This process is comparable to the Council's Equality Relevance Screening process.

28. During single option selection (GRIP 3) design phase a DIA was completed which assessed there were no negative impacts that this work could have on people with protected characteristics.

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Economy & Infrastructure) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.