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| 7 March 2017 | | ITEM: 6 |
| Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee | | |
| A13 Widening – Scheme Update | | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Not Applicable | |
| Report of: Paul Rogers, Programme Manager Major Schemes | | |
| Accountable Head of Service: Ann Osola, Head of Transportation & Highways | | |
| Accountable Director: Steve Cox, Corporate Director Environment & Place | | |
| This report is Public | | |

Executive Summary

This is to update Members about progress on the A13 Widening scheme and to request comments for feeding into the next stage.

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the progress on the A13 Widening scheme and provide comments to help inform the detailed design and construction phase.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 This report sets out the progress to date on the A13 Widening scheme and seeks Members' comments for feeding into the next stage.

2.2 The A13 widening is required as part of managing and improving traffic flow on this route. The widening of the A13 from two lanes to three lanes in both directions from the A128 junction (Orsett Cock) to the A1014 junction (The Manorway) is necessary to improve current flow and assist with the future year growth from major planned and committed investments.

2.3 A general arrangement drawing showing the location and extent of the scheme can be found in **Appendix 1**.

2.4 The need for the A13 widening was included and justified by the process (including examination in Public Inquiry) for the London Gateway Port Harbour Empowerment Order 2008 (HEO).

- 2.5 In 2013, officers commissioned a feasibility study and an outline business case for widening this section of the A13.
- 2.6 In July 2014, Government announced a funding allocation of £5M for the development of the A13 Widening scheme and up to £75M for its delivery, as part of the Local Growth Fund. The scheme is classified as a retained scheme, and falls under Department of Transport governance processes.
- 2.7 In November 2014, Cabinet delegated power to the then Director of Planning and Transportation in consultation with the Leader of the Council to enter into an agreement with London Gateway Port Limited and to act as an agent for the harbour authority under The London Gateway Port Harbour Empowerment Order 2008. Cabinet also authorised the Director to carry out tender processes and award contracts for work in advance of the main widening works, including consultancy services, detailed design and preparatory works, including the removal of flora and fauna.
- 2.8 The preliminary design work including surveys and contract preparation was completed in 2016. A competitive tendering exercise was also undertaken to procure a detail designer and contractor from the Highways England framework.
- 2.10 In December 2016, Cabinet delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Environment and Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, subject to the Council's procurement rules and terms and conditions being approved by the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to:
- Enter into an agreement with the Department for Transport (DfT) with respect to funding provided by the DfT for the A13 Widening scheme
 - Award contracts for the detail design and construction of the A13 Widening
 - Award any further contract(s) for the provision of works and services to progress the A13 Widening scheme
 - Acquire or accept dedication of any land required for the A13 Widening
- 2.11 In December 2016, officers submitted a full business case to the Department for Transport. This comprised of a management case, strategic case, an economic case, a financial case and a commercial case. A decision about funding is expected in March 2017.
- 2.12 In January 2017, officers initiated the land acquisition process to acquire the land needed for the scheme. This involved sending acquisition notices to affected land owners and displaying notices in local newspapers and on the land.

2.13 In February 2017, trial holes were excavated at several locations to expose high pressure gas mains affected by the A13 widening and thereby mitigate one of the major risks to the project.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Subject to confirmation of DfT funding, we plan to appoint a detail designer and a contractor in March 2017. The A13 Widening works are due to start in Spring 2017 and last approximately two years.

3.2 A risk register has been compiled to help manage and reduce the risk of an overspend position. This will be reviewed throughout the life of the project as new risks are identified and existing risks are mitigated or do not materialise.

3.3 Mitigation measures taken to date to reduce the probability and impact of risks include:

- Established a Project Board to overview and manage this scheme
- Used the Highways England form of contract and contract compliance processes
- Procured a detail designer and suitably sized contractor with skills and experience of widening strategic roads
- Appointed Mott Macdonald to supplement the in-house team and prepare the business case
- Appointed Aecom as preliminary designer
- Excavated trial holes to pinpoint the location of high pressure gas mains
- Early consultation with the business community to inform the detailed design of traffic management arrangements for the duration of the works

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 To comply with the reporting arrangements agreed by Cabinet and ensure democratic scrutiny of the A13 Widening scheme.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 This scheme was included in the planning and consultation for the London Gateway development including land acquisition.

5.2 Specific planning permission is not required for the highway widening but any planning and consultation required for any works or measures outside the HEO will be carried out.

5.3 Local businesses have been consulted in order to minimise disruption from the A13 widening works and associated traffic management.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 The A13 Widening scheme supports the corporate priority by encouraging and promoting job creation and economic prosperity.
- 6.2 The A13 Widening scheme also supports the Thurrock Transport Strategy (2013 – 2026) and in particular policy TTS18: Strategic Road Network Improvements by creating additional capacity to reduce congestion, improve journey times, facilitate growth and improve access to key strategic economic hubs.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Carl Tomlinson**
Finance Manager – Management Accounting

Scheme development has been funded by a £5.0m grant from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Growth Fund allocation.

A funding bid was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) in December 2016 for £66.1m with a decision expected in March 2017. The Government has classified this scheme as a retained scheme which will be subject to management process by the DfT.

The funding is completed by a contribution from the London Gateway Port Limited.

It should be noted that the financial risk of this project rests with the Council. Additional spend over and above the agreed funding mentioned above will have to be funded by the Council. Effective project and risk management are essential to mitigate this risk.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Monitoring Officer

The land acquisition and works and will be carried out using powers embodied in The London Gateway Port Harbour Empowerment Order 2008. The powers to acquire land expire in May 2018 and therefore it is imperative that construction starts prior to that date.

Section 62 of the Highways Act 1980 empowers highway authorities to carry out, in relation to a highway maintainable at public expense by them, any work

(including the provision of equipment) for the improvement of the highway and to alter or remove any works executed by them under this section.

The Council must comply with the terms of the funding agreements with the Department for Transport and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

Any diversity and equality issues will be addressed during the detailed design phase. Widening the A13 to accommodate current and future flows should reduce the impact on parallel routes e.g. the A1013, Stanford Road.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None identified at this stage.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1: General arrangement drawing

Report Author:

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Transportation & Highways