

11 March 2021	ITEM: 15
Standards and Audit Committee	
Stanford Le Hope Transport Project	
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A
Report of: Anna Eastgate, Lower Thames Crossing and Project Delivery	
Accountable Assistant Director: Anna Eastgate, Lower Thames Crossing and Project Delivery	
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place	
This report is Public	

Executive Summary

This report is provided at the Committee's request to have a quarterly update on the SLH project. This report and future reports will focus on the latest progress in delivery of the scheme, any changes in the agreed programme and any changes in the out turn forecast

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 **That the Standards and Audit Committee notes and comments on the report content.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This scheme involves the construction of new station buildings with footbridge and lifts, passenger information system, bus turnaround facility, passenger drop-off points and cycle parking.
- 2.2 There are a number of stakeholders involved in the scheme including UK Power Networks, C2C, Network Rail and the Port of London Authority and it will be delivered under a Development Agreement with C2C, who are the principal land owner.
- 2.3 A similar report was considered by Planning, Transport and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 February 2021

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

Progress

- 3.1 The Concept Design for both the station and the transport hub have been completed and passed Inter Disciplinary Review with very positive feedback. The planning application for the phase 1 station was considered at Planning Committee on 11 February and deferred for the following reasons:
- Members wanted to see the supporting facilities for the train station, in particular, they wanted to see what provision would be made for car parking, cycle storage, EV charging and bus turnaround facilities;
 - Members wanted to see the plans for the phase 2 supporting facilities alongside the current application for the station *after* it had gone out for tender so Members could be comfortable that both schemes could be delivered as one complete project.
- 3.2 In response to matters raised at the Planning Committee, there were many reasons for splitting the project into phases including enabling the scheme to come forward within the current programme for the station site, to phase construction making it cheaper and simpler for the contractor to deliver given the constraints of the station site and to manage budget and costs.
- 3.3 The concept design for the Phase 2 Transport Hub has been through final development discussions and was subject to a workshop in November to select a preferred configuration acceptable to the key Stakeholders including London Gateway DPW and c2c. A submission for pre-application planning review was made on 10 February and feedback on that is awaited prior to working up a detailed application for planning permission for the Phase 2 site in the coming months.
- 3.4 Information was sent out to 11 potential Principal Contractors within an existing Thurrock Council Framework Agreement. Of the 11, only 4 held the appropriate Network rail accreditation and 3 of those submitted Expressions of Interest, sufficient to carry out a meaningful tender. The tender documentation was progressed and ready to be issued the week commencing 22 February 2021. As a consequence of the deferral of the planning application for Phase 1, this has to be reconsidered. The intention was to let a design and build contract on a fixed price basis to ensure costs are effectively controlled and managed. As a consequence of the deferral, the risk and options of going to tender without the certainty of planning needs to be fully considered. From the lessons learned on the A13 there are concerns about going to market without the right level of detail as this affects risk and cost certainty. Further there are potential delays to the programme as a consequence of the decision to defer.
- 3.5 The project steering group is continuing to meet on a monthly basis, to share information and ideas and obtain feedback on progress to ensure this

infrastructure is coming forward with the agreement of stakeholders and local residents. So far, all the feedback has been very positive.

Programme

- 3.6 A detailed programme is currently being maintained to track the time required to deliver the scheme including a fully compliant tender process. As a consequence of the decision to defer the application for Phase 1 at Planning Committee, the programme is now under review with the likelihood that the completion of the station site will be delayed beyond the August 2022 date set out in the original business case.
- 3.7 Covid continues to be an issue in project delivery and any impacts are being monitored and mitigated but as there is not a significant presence on site at the moment, any impacts have been kept to a minimum. This will be monitored and kept under review.

Budget

- 3.8 It has been agreed with the designers that a high level “estimated project” cost evaluation exercise be carried out at two “checkpoints” through the design process, once when the full concept is agreed and a further check at final design approval, to give further certainty and to give some indicative numbers in support of the tender evaluation process. It is proposed to carry out a further check, using independent estimators to carry out a pricing exercise in parallel with the tender, to provide a benchmark against which to evaluate the tender submissions
- 3.9 The decision to defer the planning application for Phase 1 will have an impact on the budget and potentially on the quality of the scheme. This is because the costs of employing the technical team will be required for longer than was anticipated had programme been met. Further if the programme cannot be met, this also has an impact on the profile of other costs such as construction costs.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To respond to the Committee’s request for a quarterly update on the Stanford-le-Hope Interchange project.

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

- 5.1 Consultation was undertaken as part of planning process and further stakeholder engagement is continuing. This includes meetings with the residents of Chantry Crescent and local Councillors.

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

- 6.1 The Stanford-le-Hope scheme supports the Place corporate priority, in particular:

- roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**

Assistant Director, Finance

The revisions to the design and the revised programme for the delivery of the works remain under consideration alongside the associated costs. As set out in the report there are checkpoints to review the costs of the scheme during the detailed design process. The final projected costs will then be reviewed against the overall project funding.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**

Deputy Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Since this is an update report, there are no specific direct legal implications. Legal Services will provide any legal advice in relation to this project as and when required.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**

Team Leader - Community Development and Equalities

There are no direct implications arising specifically from this update report. If the scheme progresses it will offer a greater level of accessibility at the station.

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

Not applicable.

- 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**

None

Report Author

Anna Eastgate

Assistant Director Lower Thames Crossing and Project Delivery