

HS2 Phase One: Road Safety Fund

In February 2016, the Government announced that it would provide up to £30 million to support road safety schemes in local authority areas along the Phase One line of route. In November 2017, Staffordshire County Council received an allocation of £2,975,000 based on the estimated volume of construction vehicle trips anticipated in Staffordshire. The funds will remain available until the end of 2026 and HS2 Ltd requires assurance that the proposed expenditure of the fund will contribute to the overall aims of the fund, which are as follows:

- To leave a legacy of road safety improvement and risk identification along the Phase One line of the route
- Consider supporting cycling projects in the area

In 2018/19 the County Council drew down £50,000 of the fund to complete investigation, consultation, feasibility, appraisal and design work in order to develop a programme of expenditure up to 2026, in line with the aims of the fund. This work has been completed and this briefing note seeks approval for the proposed programme.

In the allocation letter, the Department for Transport recommended making use of the risk-based protocols developed by the international Roads Assessment Programme (iRAP) developed by the Road Safety Foundation. The tool was used by the County Council to help identify safety risks on roads impacted by HS2 Phase One and interventions that are likely to be the most effective in reducing the number and severity of collisions and which demonstrate good value for money.

The roads that were selected for assessment reflected the concerns expressed by local communities and an initial analysis of collision clusters. They include:

- A51 Rugeley (Brereton Hill junction) to Hopwas (Lichfield Road junction)
- A5192 Eastern Avenue
- A5127 (A5 to A38)
- Cappers Lane (A5192 to Whittington (Common Lane junction))

Road attribute surveys and data collection was completed on each route and a long list of countermeasures was identified by the Road Safety Foundation using the analysis tool. The long list was reviewed and sense-checked by the County Council and the final list of recommended schemes has been included in the programme.

Schemes within the programme have also been identified from the following sources:

- Consultation with all Parish Councils impacted by HS2 Phase One
- County Councillor discussions through the Divisional Highway Programme process
- Safety concerns revealed from road safety collision cluster analysis of accident data available from the previous three years
- Consultation with the Canal and River Trust who are particularly concerned by the impact of HS2 Phase One on the Trent and Mersey canal towpath

- Cycle routes in Lichfield identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) that have the highest forecast cycle demand. Scheme proposals were identified from audits of the routes completed by Sustrans.

The schemes identified through this process have been appraised in terms of deliverability and meeting the required outcomes. Indicative costs have been allocated to each scheme and it is currently considered that all the schemes in the programme can be delivered within the £2.975 million budget, allowing for risk, contingency and inflation. It is recommended that the funds are drawn down from HS2 Ltd in three tranches, as follows:

2021/22 Scheme Proposals (£710,000)

- Lichfield Directional Signage Strategy
- Hilliard's Cross junction with A38(T)
- Blake Street pedestrian crossing, Little Aston
- Balls Canal Bridge, Hopwas
- Pedestrian improvements Whittington
- Abnalls Lane (Lichfield to Burntwood)
- Shenstone speed enforcement

2022/23 - 2023/24 Scheme Proposals (£940,000)

- Lichfield (Eastern Ave) pedestrian, cycle and safety enhancements
- Trent and Mersey Canal Towpath improvement
- Lichfield (A5127) safety enhancements

2024/25 – 2025/26 Scheme Proposals (£1,070,000)

- A51 safety scheme (Breretonhill to Eastern Ave)
- Lichfield cycle route (Quarry Hills Lane to Lichfield Southern Bypass)
- Lichfield cycle route (A5127 St John Street to Burton Old Road)
- Birmingham Road / A5127/ St John Street junction cycle and pedestrian enhancements

The 2021/22 scheme proposals, together with funding for 2022/23 scheme design work, have been allocated in the Highway and Transport Capital Programme which will be recommended for approval at Cabinet on 17 March 2021. Table 1 provides the description, justification and source of each scheme proposal. Once Cabinet approval has been received, the County Council will seek approval from HS2 Ltd to draw down the 2021/22 funds. Going forward there will be the opportunity to revise the priorities between 2022/23 – 2025/26.

Table 1: Schemes proposed for delivery in 2021/2022

| Scheme | Description | Justification | Source | Indicative cost £000s |
|---|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| <p>Lichfield directional signage</p> | <p>Following the opening of the Lichfield Southern Bypass, roads will be downgraded to a C road, including A51 Upper St. John St, A5127 (Cappers Lane - The Friary), A5127 (The Friary - Falkland Road). A 7.5 tonne environmental weight restriction will be installed on these roads and St. John St and The Friary. Primary route status will be removed from A5127 Upper St. John St and A5127 Birmingham Road (Upper St. John St - The Friary) and Primary route status will be given to A461 Falkland Road, A461 Sainte Foy Avenue and the bypass.</p> <p>New directional signage will reflect the changes to the road hierarchy. Bridge height signage will be assessed to take account of three low height bridges and HGVs will be discouraged from using Shortbutts Lane. Advanced signing on the trunk road network, A38 and A5 will also be reviewed and agreed with Highways England.</p> | <p>Improve traffic flow by encouraging use of the most appropriate routes through the City, especially for HGVs, making effective use of the Lichfield Southern Bypass and supporting development and regeneration of the City centre.</p> | <p>The A5127 Working Group set up by the Staffordshire Freight and Communities Forum.</p> | <p>300,000</p> |
| <p>Hilliard's Cross junction with A38 safety improvement</p> | <p>It is proposed to increase the size of the two-way traffic signs and to emphasise them with yellow backing boards. The line markings and arrows showing two-way traffic on the carriageway are also to be remarked.</p> | <p>One serious and five slight injury accidents have been recorded at this location in the most recent three-year period 1/1/17-31/12/19 +known data. Five of the six accidents involved head on collisions and vehicles were travelling on the wrong side of the road. It is believed that drivers leaving the A38(T) are mistaking the two-way carriageway for a dual carriageway.</p> | <p>Road Safety collision cluster analysis</p> | <p>50,000</p> |

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| <p>Blake Street pedestrian crossing, Little Aston</p> | <p>Footway extension and pedestrian crossing provision on Blake Street in order to safely access Blake Street rail station.</p> | <p>Local communities in Shenstone have raised concerns about the safety of pedestrians accessing the rail station. Traffic and speed surveys need to identify whether a puffin crossing is required. The local communities will be significantly impacted by HS2.</p> | <p>Community engagement through the Divisional Highway Programme process</p> | <p>100,000</p> |
| <p>Balls Canal Bridge, Hopwas – Weight Restriction signage review</p> | <p>Review and correct the current signage on Balls Canal Bridge and on the approaches from A51 Lichfield Road and B5404 Plantation Lane. The current signing is meant to be structural however the roundel is environmental. The proposed changes would clearly advise drivers of the weight restriction.</p> | <p>Vehicles are exceeding the signed 7.5t weight limit. Although enforcement is a police matter, the County Council has a duty to sign correctly and the signing is incorrect, therefore unenforceable.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place with the Canal and River Trust who have also raised concerns. The aim will be to discourage HGVs from entering Hints Lane and protect the bridge as damage is being caused to the road surface. The structural issues could result in the closure of the bridge, causing delays for emergency services.</p> | <p>Community engagement through the Divisional Highway Programme process</p> | <p>10,000</p> |
| <p>Pedestrian improvements Whittington</p> | <p>Pedestrian facilities at the junction with Common Lane and footway enhancements along Common Lane between Tamworth Road and Church Street.</p> | <p>Safety concerns have been identified on the A51 at the junction with Common Lane through the Road Safety Foundation assessment and the local community. Whittington will be significantly impacted by HS2 and has limited footway provision between the A51 and the Whittington, particularly to the Primary School.</p> | <p>Road Safety Foundation assessment and community engagement through the HS2 consultation process</p> | <p>180,000</p> |

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| <p>Abnalls Lane pedestrian and cycle route (Lichfield to Burntwood)</p> | <p>Closure of Abnalls Lane from A51 to St Matthews Road Burntwood, providing a safe walking and cycle route parallel to A5190. Pedestrian / cycle crossing provision may be required on the A51 to serve Abnalls Lane.</p> | <p>Giving priority to walkers and cyclists through the removal of through traffic along Abnalls Lane will provide a safe connection between Burntwood and Lichfield along a route that has National Cycle Network designation. The route has seen an increase in use through the COVID-19 pandemic which has resulted in the community request to make it safer for walkers and cyclists. The proposal is supported by the LCWIP and Sustrans.</p> | <p>Local community engagement and LCWIP priority</p> | <p>60,000</p> |
| <p>A5127 Birmingham Road Shenstone speed enforcement</p> | <p>To replace the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) that is no longer operating close to the junction with St John's Hill. A replacement sign will warn drivers that are exceeding the 30mph speed limit and encourage them to slow down.</p> | <p>In addition to the mobile enforcement activities that are undertaken on this road by the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership, a permanent replacement VAS will help to reduce vehicles speeds particularly those of the faster drivers who contribute disproportionately to the collision risk.</p> | <p>Local community engagement and road safety collision cluster analysis</p> | <p>10,000</p> |
| Sub-total | | | | £710,000 |

Table 2: Schemes proposed for delivery in 2022/23 and 2023/24

| Scheme | Description | Justification | Source | Indicative cost £000s |
|---|---|--|---|------------------------------|
| Eastern Avenue pedestrian and cycle provision between A51 and Grange Lane, Lichfield | Enhanced pedestrian provision at the A51 junction and cycle and footway provision connecting to Grange Lane. Shared cycle use needs to be provided along the northern side of the road serving The Friary School and Leisure Centre, with cycling provision at all crossings to connect to residential areas to the south of Eastern Avenue. The scheme should also resolve significant drainage issues in the vicinity of the narrow footways adjacent to the school entrance. The A51 junction also needs to be reviewed in terms of HGV movements. | Safety concerns have been identified by the Road Safety Foundation at the junction with the A51 and the LCWIP has identified this as a key priority route for cyclists. Footway issues at the school and HGV turning issues have been raised by local communities. | Road Safety Foundation assessment, community engagement and identified as an LCWIP priority | 350,000 |
| Eastern Avenue / Grange Lane junction improvement | Consider options for improving safety at Grange Lane / Eastern Avenue junction. Options will be considered and a preferred option will be taken forward for delivery. | Collisions have previously been recorded at this junction and community engagement has identified issues with usability, safety and clarity of 'right of way' for vehicles using the junction. | Local community engagement and road safety collision cluster analysis | 100,000 |
| Eastern Avenue safety improvements between Grange Lane and Netherstowe Lane | Central hatching and removal of roadside hazards along the length of road between Grange Lane and Netherstowe Lane, tying into the new signalised junction at Watery Lane to be delivered by developers. Speed enforcement will also be considered between Watery Lane and Netherstowe Lane. | The preventative measures are recommended by the Road Safety Foundation and are designed to reduce the likelihood of serious crashes along this stretch of highway. | Road Safety Foundation assessment | 50,000 |
| Eastern Avenue cycle provision Watery Lane to Netherstowe | Provision for cyclists between Watery Lane and Netherstowe Lane within the existing greenspace, tying into a toucan crossing being delivered by developers at the Watery Lane junction and the National Cycle Network along Netherstowe Lane. | The route has been identified as a priority in the LCWIP and will connect to existing and new residential areas and the National Cycle Network | LCWIP priority route | 25,000 |
| Trent and Mersey Canal Towpath improvement Fradley | Canal towpath upgrade between Fradley Junction and A515 Kings Bromley Marina. | The canal at this location will be 'sandwiched' between Phase 1 and Phase 2a of HS2, with many of the local roads to be used as construction | Canal and River Trust and community engagement | 350,000 |

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| to Kings Bromley Marina | | routes by HS2. Improving the towpath to Kings Bromley marina would complement the improvements recently made at Fradley junction which is a popular leisure destination. | through the HS2 consultation process. | |
| A5127 Birmingham Road safety improvements south of Lichfield Southern Bypass to A5 | Central hatching along the length of the A5127 Birmingham Road between the Lichfield Southern Bypass and A5(T). | The preventative measure is recommended by the Road Safety Foundation and is designed to reduce the likelihood of serious crashes along this stretch of highway. | Road Safety Foundation assessment | 25,000 |
| A5127 Burton Road safety improvements Cappers Lane to A38 | Central hatching along the length of the A5127 Burton Road between Lichfield Trent Valley rail station and A38(T). | The preventative measure is recommended by the Road Safety Foundation and is designed to reduce the likelihood of serious crashes along this stretch of highway. | Road Safety Foundation assessment | 20,000 |
| A5127 Trent Valley Road traffic calming between Wissage Road and Cappers Lane | Speed enforcement will be considered along the A5127 Trent Valley Road between Wissage Road and Cappers Lane. | The preventative measure is recommended by the Road Safety Foundation and is designed to reduce the likelihood of serious crashes along this stretch of highway. It will complement the downgrading of the route to a C road and the proposed environmental weight restriction. Reduced speeds will also benefit pedestrians and cyclists | Road Safety Foundation assessment | 20,000 |
| | | | Sub-total | £940,000 |

Table 3: Schemes proposed for delivery in 2024/25 – 2025/26

| Scheme | Description | Justification | Source | Indicative cost £000s |
|---|---|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A51 Main Road and Stafford Road safety improvements (Breretonhill to Eastern Avenue) | Central hatching, shoulder sealing, rumble strips and the removal of roadside hazards is proposed along the length of the A51 between Breretonhill and Lichfield (Eastern Avenue). | The preventative countermeasures are recommended by the Road Safety Foundation and are designed to reduce the likelihood of serious crashes along this stretch of highway. | Road Safety Foundation assessment | 250,000 |
| Cycle routes between Quarry Hills Lane and Lichfield Southern Bypass | Shared use / segregated cycle route on A51 Tamworth Road from Quarry Hills Lane, along residential streets, such as Long Bridge Road, to A5206 London Road, linking into facilities to be delivered as part of the Lichfield Southern Bypass | The route has been identified as a priority in the LCWIP. It will tie into infrastructure to be provided as part of the Lichfield Southern Bypass and will improve sustainable connectivity to residential developments in the South of Lichfield | LCWIP priority route | 250,000 |
| A5127 segregated cycle route between St John Street and Burton Old Road | Shared use/segregated footway cycleway on the northern side of Birmingham Road from St John Street to St Michael's Road. A cycle crossing phase at Rotten Row junction will be required and a toucan crossing between St Michaels Rd and Burton Old Road | The route has been identified as a priority route in the LCWIP. It will complement the downgrading of the route to a C road and the proposed environmental weight restriction. Reduced traffic forecast along this corridor as a result of the opening of the Lichfield Southern Bypass will provide the the opportunity to reallocate road space to pedestrians and cyclists. | LCWIP priority route | 320,000 |
| Birmingham Road / A5127/ St John Street junction cycle and pedestrian enhancements | Provision of enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities at the Birmingham Road / A5127 / St John Street signalised junction, including cycle and pedestrian phases, refuges and reduced crossing distances. The scheme will tie into the segregated cycle route between St John Street and Burton Old Road. | The junction has been prioritised for improvement in the LCWIP and is supported in LCWIP District Council consultation response. It will complement the downgrading of the route to a C road and the proposed environmental weight restriction. Reduced traffic forecast along this corridor as a result of the opening of the Lichfield Southern Bypass will provide the the opportunity to reallocate road space to pedestrians and cyclists. | LCWIP priority route | 250,000 |
| | | | Sub-total | £1.07 m |