

16/12/2009 11:54

First step for £90.7 million road scheme in Norfolk

A vital £90.7m scheme to regenerate Norfolk, tackle congestion and boost economic growth by greatly improving transport links in the area will go-ahead today by Transport Minister Sadiq Khan.

The Department for Transport has indicated it will invest up to £67.5m for Norfolk County Council to deliver a new road to help relieve congestion on the inner outer ring roads and other key routes in Norwich.

The Norwich Northern Distributor Route will help provide better access to employment locations and proposed new housing growth areas, including the proposed eco-town at Rackheath - as set out in the draft core strategy for the Greater Norwich development area.

The scheme will provide 8.7 miles of new dual carriageway running from Postwick to the A140 at Norwich International Airport. This will bring faster, more reliable journeys and help attract business, visitors and investment to the area.

The Government is also today confirming the release of the £21m reserved for the Postwick Hub improvement scheme in the Communities and Local Government Department for Transport Community Infrastructure Fund announced earlier this year.

Sadiq Khan said:

"This Government is committed to investing in key transport links which help boost economic growth. We have agreed to provide significant investment to all Norfolk County Council to deliver vital improvements which will support jobs, encourage economic growth and attract further investment to the area.

"This scheme will provide improved access to the North and North East of Norwich, including improving connections to the strategic road network via the A47 A11. It will also improve access to employment locations and will help Norfolk deliver wider proposals for pedestrianisation, bus priority measures and strategic growth in and around Norwich.

"The £21m Community Infrastructure Fund investment for the proposed improvements at Postwick Hub will deliver an improved junction at Postwick, increase park and ride capacity and provide the potential to unlock sites for up to 1,600 homes, reflecting the Government's commitment to supporting growth in Norfolk

Notes to Editors:

Norwich Northern Distributor Route

The Norwich Northern Distributor Route is a local major road scheme being promoted by Norfolk County Council, as local highway authority.

Today's announcement grants the scheme 'Programme Entry' status in line with the Department for Transport's local major scheme guidance approval process.

The next steps in the process would be for Norfolk County Council to take the scheme through the necessary statutory process. The scheme that we are awaiting initial funding approval is a shorter version of the scheme that Norfolk County Council has been promoting.

This scheme is a 14km (8.7 miles) dual carriageway from Postwick to the A140 at Norwich International Airport and is estimated to cost £90.7m with a contribution of up to £67.5 million from the Department, subject to Norfolk meeting a number of conditions, including successful completion of the necessary statutory powers.

Norfolk hope the scheme will be able to commence construction in early 2013 and to be completed in 2015.

Postwick Hub Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) Scheme

Following Norfolk County Council submitting a Business Case for CIF funding to the Government in October 2008, we jointly announced in March 2009 with the Department for Communities and Local Government that we were minded to accept funding for a number of Community Infrastructure Schemes, including the Postwick Hub Interchange scheme.

The Community Infrastructure Funding is a dual-key capital fund and provides financial support for small and medium scale transport schemes necessary to housing sites and housing growth potential in the Growth Areas.

Our March announcement explained that whilst the Government were minded to provide funding of £21m towards the Postwick Hub Interchange scheme we were not able to release the funds until the outcome of our assessment of the proposed Norwich Northern Distributor Road was completed. By granting initial funding approval today, we are also agreeing to release funding to Norfolk County Council, subject to the completion of the necessary statutory powers required.

The Postwick scheme consists of providing improvements to the junction at Postwick, enabling increased capacity of the associated Park and Ride site and providing the potential to unlock sites for 600 homes with the potential for another 1000 homes at a later date. Norfolk is hoping to commence construction for the scheme in February 2010.

Press Enquires: 020 7944 3066

Out of Hours: 020 7944 4292

Public Enquiries: 0300 330 3000

Department for Transport Website: <http://www.dft.gov.uk>

PRESS CONTACTS

COI East
01223 370 780
cambridge@coi.gsi.gov.uk

Jenny Thompson
01223 370784
jenny.thompson@coi.gsi.gov.uk