

Report to: **Partnership Board - Transport for the South East**

Date of meeting: **18 October 2021**

By: **Lead Officer, Transport for the South East**

Title of report: **Area Studies Progress Update**

Purpose of report: **To provide a progress update on the area studies programme.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The members of the Partnership Board are recommended to note the progress made with work on the area studies.

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on the five area studies.

2 Financial considerations

2.1 In May 2019 the Department for Transport (DfT) made a grant award of £500,000 to TfSE to take forward the technical work programme including the area studies. On 13 March 2020, the DfT approved a variation to the £500,000 grant, authorising TfSE to undertake additional preliminary tasks to ensure that a robust evidence base was in place for the area studies. The remaining funding available from the 2019/20 grant was sufficient to enable TfSE to proceed with commissioning one area study.

2.2 In August 2020 the DfT made a grant award of £1,225,000 to TfSE to take forward further elements of the technical work programme including the area studies. This provided sufficient funding to take forward two further area studies.

2.3 In March 2021 the DfT made a grant award of £1,225,000 to TfSE to take forward further elements of the technical work programme including the area studies. This provided sufficient funding to take forward the remaining two area studies.

3 Area studies background

3.1 The programme of area studies will identify where geographically, when in time, and under what conditions, packages of scheme interventions and wider policy initiatives should be implemented across the South East to deliver the 2050 vision set out in our transport strategy. The outputs from these studies will feed into the development of TfSE's Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). Each of the packages presented in the SIP will identify a range of scheme options that will need to be subject to further study to identify which of these option should be introduced at any particular location.

3.2 The specific geographic location and movement types within scope for each study along with their sequencing and programme for delivery was agreed at the Partnership Board meeting on 22 October 2020. Five area studies are to be carried out; two focusing on orbital movements and three focusing on radial movements across the TfSE geography.

4 Area studies progress update

4.1 A diagram showing the stages and steps of work to be undertaken through the area studies, along with each study's relative progress is shown at Appendix 1.

4.2 The outer orbital area study commenced in August 2020 and work is progressing well. The Stage B work (evidence base development) setting out the need for intervention and identify study specific aims and objectives is complete. The Stage C work (option generation and assessment) is also complete. In Stage C, a long list of potential interventions was prepared, drawn from a variety of sources including review of other strategies/plans, stakeholder input, and wider thinking from the project team including various subject matter experts. These were assessed against the study's agreed strategic objectives and other wider economic and delivery criteria using a multi-criteria assessment framework (MCAF) following a process that aligns to the Department for Transport's Transport Appraisal Guidance. The outcomes from the MCAF were used to inform the development of packages of interventions. Further assessment and modelling work to refine the packages of interventions was then undertaken utilising the SEELUM model that was developed for the transport strategy.

4.3 Mobilisation of the inner orbital and south central radial studies commenced in December 2020. Both studies are progressing well and benefitting from experience gained and lessons learned in the outer orbital study. The Stage B (evidence base development) work is complete and Stage C (option generation and assessment) is also nearing completion.

4.4 Following confirmation of the 2021/22 grant from DfT, the south west radial and south east radial studies commenced in May 2021. With much of the evidence base already prepared and with the benefit of lessons learned from earlier studies they are progressing at a faster pace and to a compressed timescale. The Stage B work (evidence base development) is complete. Work is now progressing well with Stage C (option generation and assessment).

4.5 In addition to location specific interventions, the area studies have also identified a list of wider policy interventions that, in general, would apply across a large part (if not all) of the TfSE area. These 57 interventions are termed "global policy interventions" and they include non-geographically specific interventions such as integrated ticketing, alternative fuels, demand management measures, freight consolidation centres, interventions arising from the Future Mobility and Freight strategies, and a greater level of integration of spatial and transport planning.

4.6 In view of their “global” nature these interventions were assessed through a separate MCAF that assessed them against the vision, goals and priorities set out in the TfSE Transport Strategy rather than the area specific objectives. Again, because of the nature of the interventions, not all of them are able to be modelled using SEELUM, but where it is possible to do so this has been done.

4.7 The five geographic areas identified for the area study work were largely arbitrary; they provided a way of enabling us to focus our study work and target engagement through different movement types (radial/orbital) and at a manageable scale. As the technical work progressed, it became increasingly clear that there was a need to bring the five areas together sooner in the process than had initially been envisaged to enable the cumulative benefits and impacts of the both the emerging packages of interventions and the global policy interventions to be fully assessed and understood holistically before coming to any firm conclusions.

4.8 Thinking on the scope and role of the SIP has also evolved in recent months, and there is now a much clearer idea of how the outputs from the area studies need to feed into the development of the forthcoming SIP.

4.9 For these reasons the methodology for the reporting on the outcomes of Stage D (further appraisal) of the area studies has been revised. Rather than preparing a separate Strategic Programme Outline Case (SPOC) Area Plan and Delivery Plan for each geographic area study, this work will now be presented in a more streamlined way focusing instead around the strong strategic narratives that have emerged from the technical work, whilst also reflecting how the area studies work needs to be presented in the SIP.

4.10 A programme showing the timescales for undertaking the studies and the Strategic Investment Plan is shown at Appendix 2.

5 Stakeholder engagement

5.1 Stakeholders have been engaged throughout the area studies development with area specific working group discussions providing the opportunity for detailed technical input and challenge from TfSE’s constituent authorities and other key stakeholders as the work progresses. We are very grateful for the continued high level of engagement from our working groups who are providing valuable insight and challenge as the studies progress.

5.2 An area study forum has also been convened for each study and these will meet three times during the study’s progress to feed in wider stakeholder views at key points, including setting the objectives for the study and inputting into the long lists. There have been two forum meetings held for each of the studies, and there has been a very good level of engagement and input from these stakeholders.

5.3 The Outer Orbital study is nearing the point where it was assumed the final stakeholder forum would be held. However for the reasons outlined above, it was decided to cancel the originally proposed ‘third and final stakeholder’ forums for each individual area study, and instead replace them with an event (or events) that will

address the combined outcomes of the whole area study work programme. A time and date for this revised event/s is yet to be identified, but due to the need for the final two studies to “catch up” with the first three this is likely to take place in early 2022.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 The Partnership Board is recommended to note the work undertaken to date and the progress made with the area study work programme. A further progress update on the area studies will be presented to the Partnership Board at the January 2022 meeting.

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Lead Officer

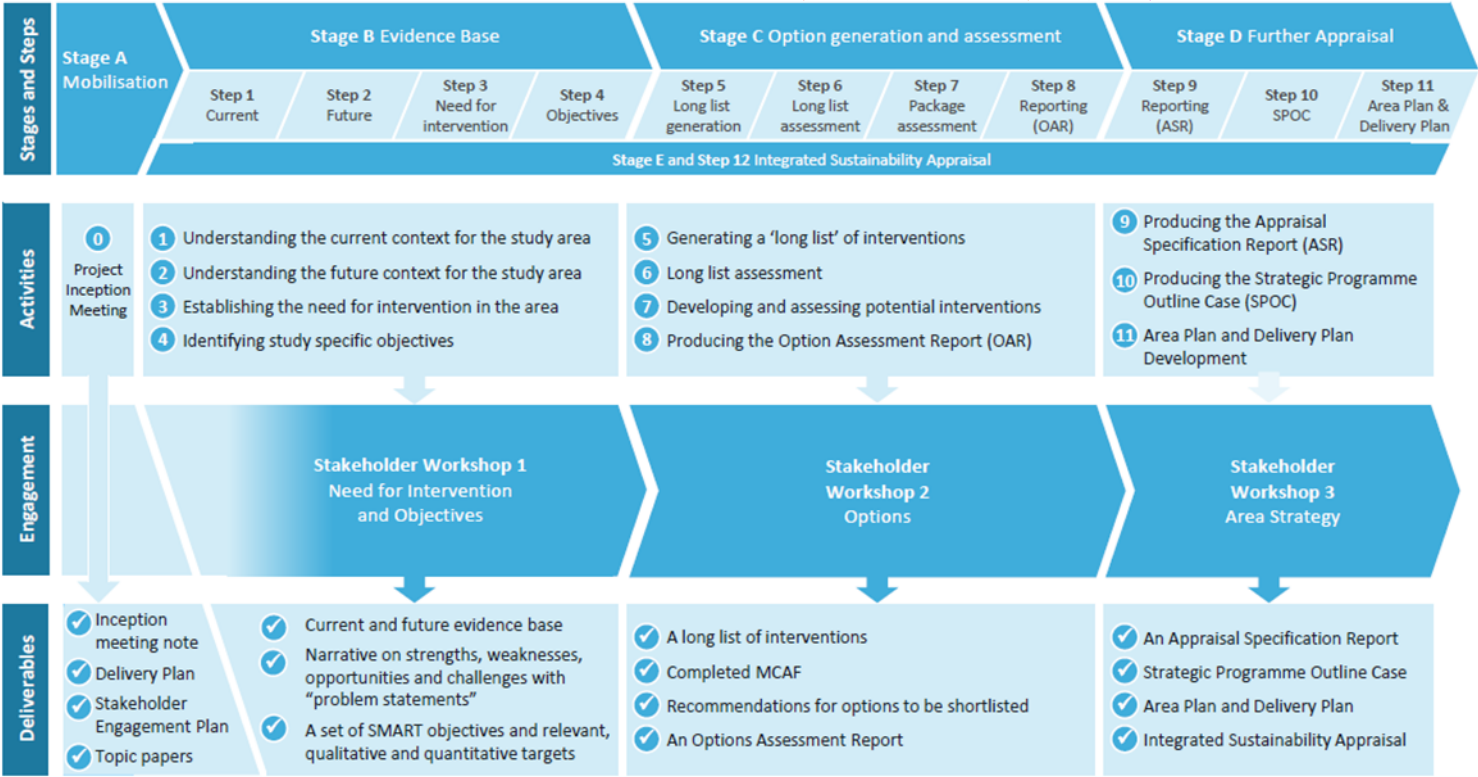
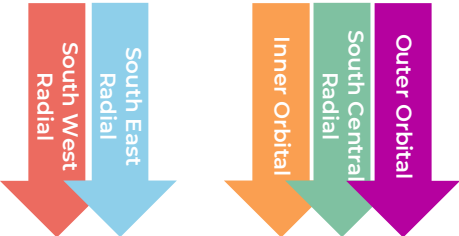
Transport for the South East

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Area Studies progress



Route map to the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)

