



WARRINGTON

Borough Council

Mr Jesse Norman MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
for Roads, Local Transport and Devolution

Professor Steven Broomhead
Chief Executive

Town Hall
Sankey Street
Warrington
WA1 1UH

Our Ref: SB/JH

19 December 2017

Dear Mr Norman

RE: Outline Business Case Submission – Warrington Waterfront Western Link

Warrington Borough Council has the pleasure to enclose our Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Warrington Waterfront Western Link scheme. The scheme will provide a new high-level crossing of the Manchester Ship Canal which will both reduce traffic congestion and increase the resilience of the transport network in Warrington. It will also play a significant role as part of the Council's wider economic regeneration and development agenda being pursued across the borough. It is a key component of both the 'Warrington Means Business' economic development strategy and the emerging draft Local Plan.

The Western Link, as demonstrated through the OBC, shows strong transport and wider economic returns on any government investment. The Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) is within the 'high value for money' category, currently indicating an adjusted BCR of 2.24. The wider benefits to the local economy include the direct delivery of circa 900 homes, contributing to meeting central government aims to deliver a house building renaissance. In addition the scheme would lead to the creation of 367 net additional jobs through the expansion of Port Warrington, a major node in the Atlantic Gateway growth strategy. The wider economic impacts assessment estimates that this will add an additional £16.1m in net additional GVA per annum to the Warrington economy, totalling £137.63m net additional GVA over a 30-year appraisal period. We are proud to be supporting a scheme that delivers such strong economic benefits.

These benefits will support the wider development and economic growth agenda being pursued across the north of England through our colleagues at Transport for the North (TfN) and the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP).

The Western Link scheme is aligned with TfN's strategic aims as set out in its Draft Strategic Transport Plan to allow the North to increase its productivity, create more job opportunities and make a greater contribution to the UK economy. Indeed, the Western Link is named as a local strategic connectivity priority for TfN. The delivery of the Western Link also supports the CWLEP Strategic Economic Plan through provision of infrastructure to deliver new housing, jobs and economic growth.

Locally, we have a strong track record in the delivery of major infrastructure schemes, particularly those that are connected to generating additional economic growth. This is maximised through the joint work with Warrington's urban regeneration partnership, 'Warrington & Co'. We are currently managing a capital programme in excess of £250m that includes a range of major transport and regeneration schemes with the former being part-funded through the Local Growth Fund, National Productivity Investment Fund and New Stations Fund, with the Council making significant local funding contributions to all of these schemes.

This has continued with the Western Link scheme, with the Council making a clear statement of intent by declaring a preferred route, made and having made a significant investment in the production of the OBC to complement the Large Local Major grant award. Further to this the Council is proposing to under write a substantial local contribution of one third of the full scheme cost. In the interim the Council has also committed to continue with scheme development in the coming months, in advance of a decision on funding, with work to be undertaken across a number of key programme critical areas including public engagement / consultation, legal and land/property issues, preparation of survey work such and topographical and ground investigation (with completion of seasonal ecology surveys) and continued liaison with key bodies such as Network Rail, Natural England and others as required.

Finally, as part of the development of the OBC, the local MP for Warrington South, within whose constituency the Western Link scheme sits, Faisal Rashid MP has been regularly briefed on progress and we are pleased to confirm his support for the scheme. His letter of support is included in the OBC.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch should you have any questions or require further information and we look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven Broomhead', is centered on a light grey background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Professor Steven Broomhead
Chief Executive