



Press Release

22 May 2025

Whittlesey Relief Road feasibility study published as Council approves next steps for further work

Fenland District Council has agreed to progress the next phase of the Whittlesey Relief Road project, including sourcing £220,000 of extra funding required to complete more detailed work.

The decision agreed by the Council's ruling Cabinet on Monday, 19 May, comes following the publication of a feasibility study which presents a compelling case for a relief road to be built.

The completion of the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOC) marks a crucial step in addressing the town's long-standing transport challenges – highlighting the urgent need for intervention to relieve growing congestion, improve safety, and support sustainable economic and housing growth in the town.

Commissioned by the Whittlesey Relief Road project board and developed with funding from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), the study developed by transport consultants Mott McDonald reflects two years of detailed technical work, stakeholder engagement, and public consultation.

The preferred option emerging from the study is a new southern relief road for Whittlesey, including the re-routing of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and active travel improvements for walking and cycling.

This option – [Option 3 in the document appraisal](#) – was found to deliver the greatest overall benefits for the community, addressing congestion and reducing the dominance of traffic through the town centre while enhancing public spaces.

Cllr Chris Seaton, who was Fenland District Council's portfolio holder for transport and Chair of the Whittlesey Relief Road project board overseeing the SOC, said: "The Strategic Outline Business Case confirms what residents and businesses in Whittlesey have known for years: that the town is under increasing pressure from traffic, particularly HGVs, and the situation will only worsen as more housing is created."

“A relief road would be transformational for the town – helping to protect Whittlesey’s unique character while unlocking new opportunities for growth, connectivity, and quality of life.”

Public support for a relief road is overwhelming, with 91 per cent of respondents to Fenland District Council’s public consultation in late 2024 backing the concept.

As well as addressing traffic issues, the preferred scheme (relief road plus active travel improvements) was recognised in the SOC for its potential to reduce pollution, improve safety, and create a more people-friendly town centre.

The SOC also outlines critical infrastructure challenges, including frequent flooding-related closures on the B1040 and capacity issues at key junctions. These risks compromise the resilience of the transport network and highlight the need for an alternative route.

However, the current cost of a relief road is so significant that more detailed work is needed to reflect the wider benefits in the scheme’s ‘benefit-cost ratio’ and demonstrate stronger value for money – a key requirement for securing government funding.

Fenland District Council is now seeking additional funding of £220,000 to undertake the further work, which will focus on reducing scheme costs, monetising broader benefits, and assessing the scheme’s potential to support long-term land use and economic development, particularly along the A605 corridor.

On Monday 19 May, the Council’s Cabinet considered a report recommending this next phase and agreed to explore how it could be funded – including through the Council directly or potentially securing funding from the CPCA or third-party sources.

“The Strategic Outline Business Case makes a clear case for traffic intervention in Whittlesey but, as it stands, the benefit-cost ratio is too low for the project to progress to Outline Business Case,” added Cllr Seaton.

“The recommended assessment work would help us address the gap between the benefits costed so far and the scale and cost of the proposed scheme, with the aim of demonstrating better value for money.”

The full Strategic Outline Business Case and supporting appendices are available on the Fenland District Council website (Agenda item 8 – additional documents):
[Agenda for Cabinet on Monday, 19th May, 2025, 2.00 pm - Fenland District Council](#)

Ends

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk