

Kent Thameside Strategic Transport (Homes and Roads) Programme: An Overview

The Homes and Roads programme has been designed to deliver a package of strategic transport infrastructure works to facilitate significant planned growth in housing and employment in the boroughs of Dartford and Gravesham in Kent Thameside, part of the Thames Gateway.

The programme originally included 11 inter-related infrastructure projects costing £175 million. It included junction improvements to the A2; a package of traffic and demand management measures on both the strategic and local road network; selected highway improvements to the local road network and investment in the Fastrack rapid transit system. These projects span both boroughs and are required to provide transport capacity for approximately 24,000 new homes and 1.1m sq.m. of commercial floorspace to be delivered over the next 20 years or so.

Funding was originally anticipated to come through three main sources: grant funding through central government departments (DCLG & DfT); individual S.106 agreements, including a contribution from Land Securities through the Eastern Quarry development; and a development tariff set against both residential and commercial development. Funding from these sources is pooled in an Investment Fund.

In terms of governance, Kent County Council (KCC) acts as the Accountable Body for the programme. KCC has set up and administers the Investment Fund under KCC's corporate financial procedures. KCC would also enter into separate agreements with DfT, HCA and the Borough Councils. The overall co-ordination of the programme is the responsibility of a dedicated Programme Manager who will act as the Client's representative and the budget holder for the Investment Fund.

A Steering Committee has been set up to provide a basis for consultation on key issues affecting the programme as it progresses, although final decision making rests with the individual Parties to the agreement. The Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee set the framework by which all of the partners involved affirm their commitment to a co-ordinated effort in the delivery of the programme and ensure that decisions made regarding the governance of the programme meet the requirements of the individual funding agreements. The Committee meets quarterly and is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the programme and agrees the Annual Progress Report and Forward Delivery Programme.

The programme is up and running through an initial grant from the HCA, although the scope of works and the balance of funding is under review following recent cut backs in public sector funding. The most recent modelling has been looking at opportunities to reduce the cost of the programme and the potential of alternative sources of funding income that might be raised through the Community Infrastructure Levy, New Homes Bonus and business rates retention.

Since 2008, BBP has provided development and economic advice to KCC on the Homes and Roads programme. We have worked with KCC to develop the structure and financial model for the Homes and Roads programme and we have run a large number of options and scenarios. BBP also prepared an economic appraisal to HM Treasury Green Book requirements which secured the HCA funding.

BBP Regeneration

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