

Supporting Economic Growth

England's strategic road network (SRN) is a key enabler of economic performance and prosperity and is essential to the growth, wellbeing and balance of the nation's economy.

Highways England already does a lot to support growth. Indeed almost everything we do to modernise, maintain and operate the SRN is about ensuring safe, efficient, reliable journeys, and therefore is linked to economic performance.

We are working to build on this, including:

Refreshing our approach to engaging with planning matters

In September 2015 we launched our new planning guide – *Planning for the Future: a guide to working with Highways England on planning matters*. This is aimed at helping local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and developers to develop strong plans and proposals that make the best of opportunities around the SRN. The guide sets out how we intend to work with partners

– including our commitment to engage early, work collaboratively and freely share our information and experience. It also sets out guidance on the technical aspects around highways planning that development proposers need to work through as part of their proposal.

The guide is available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-and-the-major-road-network-in-england>



Working collaboratively to develop our first joint strategic economic growth plan

The plan will set out a clear vision and action plan for how the SRN and Highways England will support economic growth, working in collaboration with our partners. The plan will guide our activities and provide evidence for Route Strategies and future Road Investment Strategies (RIS).

We will be working with a wide range of stakeholders throughout 2016 to develop the plan, with a consultation in the Autumn and final publication by the end of 2016.

Developing our new £100 million Growth and Housing Fund

The new Growth and Housing Fund (2016-2021) allows us to invest in improvements to the SRN that are needed specifically to mobilise nearby development sites and enable swift delivery of jobs and homes. These are sites which are ready to go, but are held back by the capacity of the SRN. Funded schemes will be on or near our network, in final stages of planning and design, and deliver early jobs and homes. In most cases, we anticipate investing up to £5m per scheme, with substantial match funding from private and public sources.

We launched the fund in January 2016 and will be announcing the first wave of schemes in early Summer 2016.

Developing economic intelligence

We are developing a mapping tool to help us to understand the SRN and the relationship it has with local, regional, and national economic assets, plus the local opportunities and proposals for economic growth.

This tool will include:

- The SRN and location of our RIS 1 improvement schemes
- Development sites in adopted local plans
- The status of planning applications and the subsequent developments on which we have been consulted
- Relevant economic and infrastructure assets, such as airports and ports.

If you would like to know more about our approach to supporting growth, or have any ideas or views you would like to share with us, please email our team: growthandplanning@highwaysengland.co.uk