

Midlands Connect and RIS2

Turning evidence into investment



Our Five Priorities for the Midlands from Highways England's Road Investment Strategy 2 (2020-2025)

- 1) Deliver what was promised to start construction in RIS1
- 2) Deliver schemes developed in RIS1
- 3) Deliver new schemes in RIS2
- 4) Plan for the future – support corridor approaches
- 5) Strengthen the relationship between Highways England and Midlands Connect

England's second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) period, which runs from April 2020 to March 2025 has a record £25 billion budget, a 40% increase from RIS1. The Midlands must maximise this opportunity.

As a region, we are at the heart of the road network. A third of all road freight travels through, from or to the Midlands. It's vital that Highways England's RIS programme reflects how important the Midlands is to the national network, and that RIS2 investments contribute to Midlands Connect's aim of adding £5 billion a year to the economy.

Midlands Connect has five clear, deliverable objectives from RIS2 to ensure short-term progress as well as a commitment to future-proofing our road network and unleashing the Midlands' growth potential.

1. Deliver what was promised - Complete the construction of RIS1 commitments

A number of Midlands projects earmarked for RIS1 (2015-2020) will not be completed before the end of the period. Not only are these projects of vital significance to the future of the regional and national transport systems, but also, Midlands Connect's own modelling and business cases assume that all of the Midlands' RIS1 schemes are delivered in full. It is essential for us that the Midlands gets what was promised, and that outstanding schemes are completed during RIS2 (2020-2025).

Figure 1 shows the outstanding schemes.

2. Deliver schemes developed in RIS1

Some schemes developed in RIS1 had no commitment for construction in RIS2. We're working with Highways England to ensure robust and compelling business cases are finalised for these schemes, with a commitment to deliver them during RIS2.

Smart Motorway M1 Junction 19 to 23a (including an upgrade to Junction 21)

This upgrade will create a continuous smart motorway link from London to Yorkshire. Junction 21 upgrades near Leicester are of particular importance to the next stages of our long-term plan for the A46 corridor.

Birmingham Box Smart Motorway Phase 4.

Completing the smart motorway network throughout the Birmingham Box (M5, M6, M42) improves reliability and supports new jobs and homes. Our Midlands Motorway Hub study outlines a longer term plan for releasing additional road capacity, vital to the national, regional and local economies. Midlands Connect is currently seeking clarity on the details of this scheme.

A50 Uttoxeter Project B: Eastern junction

Junction improvements to the west of Uttoxeter are almost complete, supporting access to housing and employment sites. Project B, the second phase of improvements, is still being considered by Highways England. Delivering these improvements during RIS2 is vital for multinational companies including Bombardier, JCB, Toyota and Rolls Royce, who rely on the region's transport links for just-in-time manufacturing processes and access to markets.

A46 Newark Northern Bypass

This essential upgrade removes a major bottleneck, helps facilitate housing and employment sites and improves access for freight traffic travelling along the A46, one of the country's most important trade routes. Midlands Connect's overall plans for the A46 corridor could add £7.1 billion to the UK economy.

Mark Turner,
Chief Operating Officer, JCB

"JCB continues to create jobs and invest in Staffordshire. But like many of the other big employers based along the A50 corridor, to keep investing and growing, we need the A50 to be resilient, accessible and reliable 365 days a year. While we're pleased the Project A improvements to the west of Uttoxeter are nearly complete, we need Highways England to deliver Project B to the north of Uttoxeter as soon as possible. Without the full promised upgrade, there's a risk the A50 could constrain economic growth for companies like JCB along the A50 corridor, rather than support it."



3. Deliver new schemes in RIS2

Once committed RIS1 schemes are delivered, experience tells us that some reprioritisation is likely. We suggest Highways England works with Sub-national Transport Bodies to identify the shovel-ready initiatives which could have an immediate positive impact on the regional and national economies, while the longer-term pipeline of schemes is developed.

These will include:

- > M6 J15-16 Smart Motorway (including junction 15 improvements);
- > A49 Hereford Bypass;
- > M5 Junction 1 improvements;
- > M6 Jo-2 Smart Motorway; and
- > A5 upgrade between the M42 and M69.



RIS1 commitments planned for construction

- 1 A500 Etruria Valley
- 2 M6 J13-15 Smart Motorway
- 3 M54 to M6 Link Road
- 4 A5 Dodwells to Longshoot Widening
- 5 M40 M42 Interchange Smart Motorway
- 6 M6 J10
- 7 M42 J6
- 8 A38 Derby Junctions
- 9 A46 Coventry Junction Upgrades
- 10 A52 Nottingham Junctions

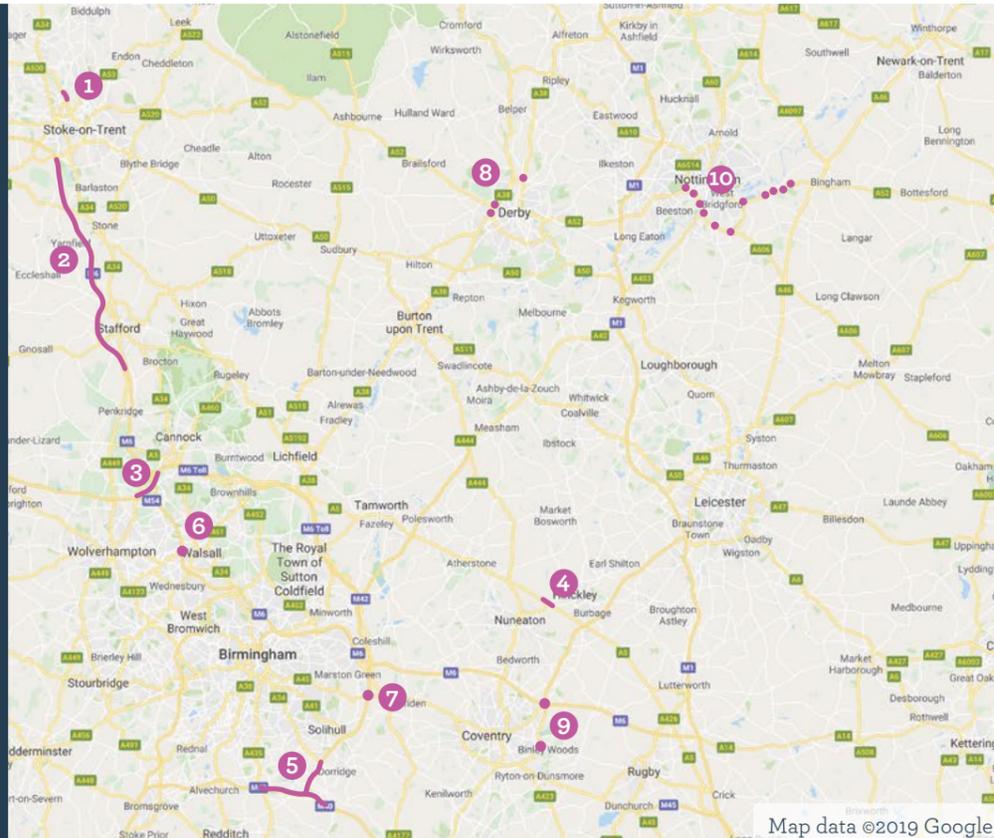


Figure 1 - RIS1 commitments planned for construction

RIS1 development schemes to be delivered in RIS2

- 1 A50 Uttoxeter Project B: Eastern junction
- 2 A46 Newark Northern Bypass
- 3 Smart Motorway M1 J19-23a
- 4 Birmingham Box Smart Motorway (Phase 4)

Deliver new schemes in RIS2

- 1 M6 J15-16 Smart Motorway (including J15 improvements)
- 2 A49 Hereford Bypass
- 3 M5 J1 improvements
- 4 M6 Jo-2 Smart Motorway
- 5 A5 upgrade between the M42 and M69

Plan for the future

- 1 A52/M1 J25
- 2 A46 corridor
- 3 A50/A500 corridor
- 4 A5 corridor

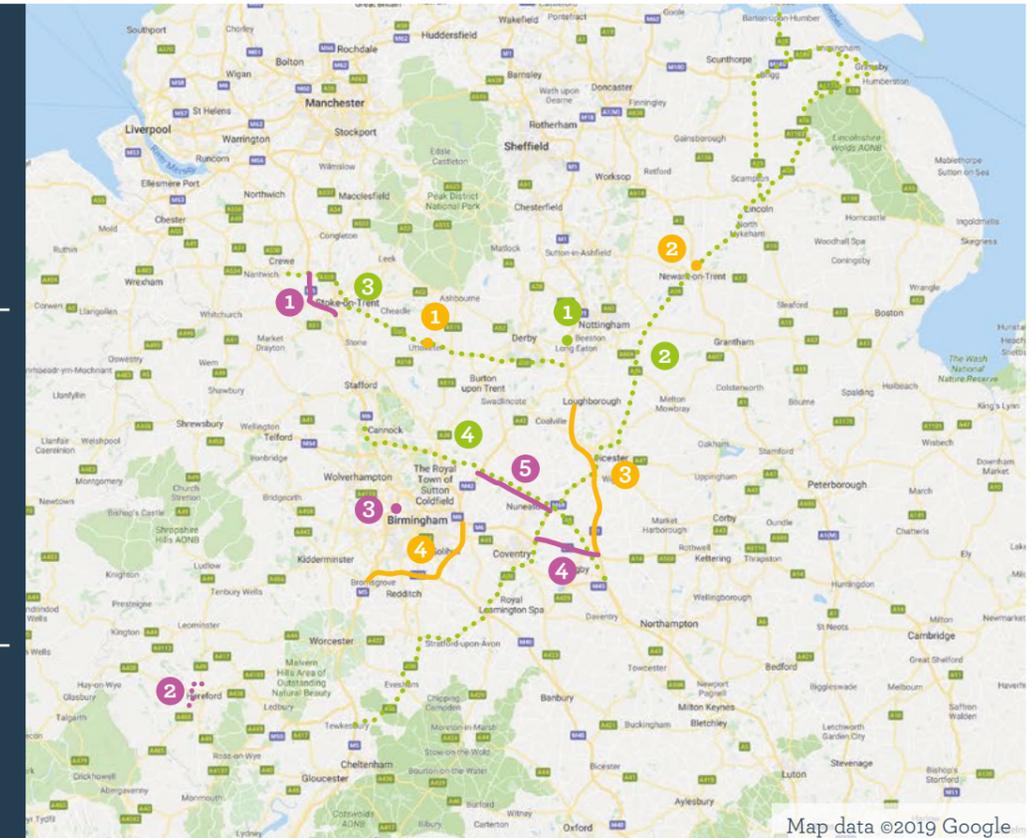


Figure 2 - Deliver schemes developed in RIS1, Deliver new schemes in RIS2 & Plan for the future

4. Plan for the future – support corridor approaches

Five-year planning periods are too constrained to support transformational investment and growth, and these artificial boundaries should be removed where possible.

In 2019, Midlands Connect will complete two years of technical corridor studies for the **A46, A5** and **A50/A500**, setting out 10-20 year investment programmes.

We are seeking endorsement of our long-term corridor approach to future-proof access to jobs and supply chains and provide a resilient alternative to the motorway network.

Midlands Connect is asking for a formal role alongside Highways England and the Department for Transport (DfT) in the RIS decision-making process, to prepare a shovel-ready, future-proofed programme of Midlands priority schemes in RIS2 that shapes delivery programmes for RIS3 (2025-2030) and RIS4 (2030-2035).

Access to the HS2 East Midlands Hub at Toton

It is particularly important to ensure Highways England develops, in partnership with HS2 Ltd, a comprehensive scheme for the A52/M1 Junction 25 to address existing congestion and future-proof it ready for the arrival of the HS2 East Midlands Hub station at Toton. To ensure delivery before the most intense periods of HS2 construction and the start of new train services from Toton, this scheme must be developed in RIS2 and delivered in RIS3.

5. Strengthen the relationship between Highways England and Midlands Connect

Our partners across the Midlands are looking for clarity on what input they can expect in developing a future Road Investment Strategy that builds on Midlands Connect's already close, collaborative relationship with Highways England.

We're seeking regular updates from Highways England on progress and risks associated with committed Midlands Connect priority schemes in RIS2, and the opportunity to provide alternative delivery options to ensure our ambitions are completed on time and on budget.

This includes identifying alternatives to RIS funding that could accelerate our overall programme, including the government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government) and Transforming Cities Fund (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy).



The HS2 East Midlands Hub at Toton will require enhanced access via the A52

Conclusion

With a record £25 billion being invested in England's strategic road network over the next five years, the Midlands must see the benefit of a 40% increase in funds available. The Midlands' lack of 'mega' projects, like the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway or the Lower Thames Crossing, must not mean that nationally important projects in our region are overlooked for development and delivery.

That's why we think our asks of Government are ambitious, but wholly reasonable. We need promises to be kept on existing commitments from RIS1; and we want to work with Government to develop and deliver a small number of Midlands priorities in RIS2. Finally, we believe agreeing a longer-term approach to corridor master planning is fundamental to getting the greatest economic and social benefits out of our transport system.

By future-proofing the Midlands' road network, RIS2 can support our national freight and road networks, while also promoting increased productivity, housing development and jobs growth. Ensuring the Midlands' infrastructure is fit for purpose is essential for all our people and businesses to reach their full potential.



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