

Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Delegated Officer Decision

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 05 February 2025

Report Title

Submission of the Rotherham Integrated Mainline Station Outline Business Case

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

Yes

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

Lucy Mitchell, Regeneration Manager

lucy.mitchell@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Council is working with partners to promote the development of a new Gateway (mainline and tram-train) Station in Rotherham; improving local, regional, and national rail connectivity for local people and businesses, offering access to employment and business growth opportunities. The Council has prepared an Outline Business Case (OBC) that, in summary, sets out the designs, costs and benefits for the mainline station and tram train stop.

In March 2024, as part of the Transport Capital programme 2024/25 report, Cabinet delegated authority to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, to submit the completed Rotherham Mainline Station OBC to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) and the Department for Transport (DfT) upon conclusion of the final review stages (estimated June 2024). The purpose of this report is to exercise this delegation and submit the completed OBC.

Recommendations

1. That the Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, submit the completed Rotherham Mainline Station Outline Business Case (OBC) to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) and the Department for Transport (DfT).

List of Appendices Included

EXEMPT Appendix 1 – Rotherham Gateway Station Outline Business Case
Appendix 2 – Initial Equality Screening
Appendix 3 – Carbon Impact assessment

Background Papers

[Printed minutes Monday 24-Apr-2023 10.00 Cabinet.pdf \(rotherham.gov.uk\)](#)

[Decision - Rotherham Integrated Mainline and Tram Train Station Outline Business Case funding approval and contractor appointments - Rotherham Council](#)

[Printed minutes Monday 18-Mar-2024 10.00 Cabinet.pdf](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel
No

Council Approval Required
No

Exempt from the Press and Public
Yes or No? If yes, use text below.

An exemption is sought for **Appendix 1** under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains information that relates to land in private ownership.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because all such information relating to the land in private ownership should remain confidential in advance of detailed dialogue with the relevant private landowners being established.

Submission of the Rotherham Integrated Mainline Station Outline Business Case

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham suffers from comparatively poor rail connectivity as the town is currently served only by a branch line at Rotherham Central station. The Council is working with partners to promote and progress development of a new Gateway Station (mainline rail and tram-train) in Rotherham. This new station will significantly improve local, regional and national rail connectivity for local people and businesses, offering access to employment and business growth opportunities and contributing significantly to the economic regeneration of the town.
- 1.2 Following the Council's preparation and submission of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) for a new Mainline Station, SYMCA released £1m funding to the Council to further develop the project to Outline Business Case (OBC).
- 1.3 Whilst the SOBC solely considered the merits of a new mainline rail station, the Station Board, overseeing the project acknowledged the importance of exploring the inclusion of a new tram train stop as part of the OBC to articulate the costs and benefits of a fully integrated transport hub incorporating significantly improved national, regional and local connectivity.
- 1.4 The purpose of the OBC is to comprehensively outline the strategic rationale for the project, provide design and cost information and articulate the benefits of the project. This is necessary to secure further funding to enable project development work, particularly the preparation of a Full Business Case, to continue. The project, whilst funded to date from SYMCA devolved funding (City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement), is a Department for Transport (DfT) 'retained' project. A DfT 'retained' scheme requires the project business case to go through DfT's assurance and approvals processes in addition to the local (SYMCA) assurance framework.
- 1.5 In April 2023, to enable preparation of the OBC, Cabinet approved the issue of Council contracts to Network Rail and Transport for the North to provide key components required for the OBC. Specialist consultants were also appointed by the Council to coordinate the outputs from Network Rail and Transport for the North and draft the OBC.
- 1.6 Cabinet, in March 2024, as part of the Transport Capital Programme 2024/25 report, delegated submission of the Outline Business Case to SYMCA and DfT, to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Outline Business Case Preparation

Given the funding source for the preparation of the OBC and the anticipated sources of funding for the next stage of project development work, the

Outline Business Case has been prepared in line with SYMCA's Assurance Framework used to govern devolved funding streams.

2.2 As the project is a DfT retained scheme, it has also been prepared in accordance with Transport Business Case guidance, and the Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) issued by the Department for Transport (DfT). It also recognises the requirements of the HM Treasury's Green Book and associated supplementary guidance on public sector business cases.

2.3 **Content of the OBC**

The Outline Business Case comprises five cases (summarised below) and a number of appendices containing supporting technical information to the OBC:

- **Strategic:** provides the rationale for undertaking the project by demonstrating the need for change, and how the intervention furthers the aims and objectives of not only SYMCA and RMBC, but also DfT, Network Rail and Transport for the North (TfN);
- **Economic:** demonstrates the clear benefits of the project in terms of value for money in relation to economic, social and environmental impacts;
- **Financial:** explains how the anticipated costs have been derived and illustrates how the project is considered affordable and fundable;
- **Commercial:** demonstrates that the preferred way forward will result in a viable procurement and a well-structured contract between the public sector and its service providers;
- **Management:** demonstrates that robust arrangements are in place for the delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of the project and that the necessary arrangements are in place for change and contract management, benefits realisation, and risk management.

2.4 **OBC Preparation Governance and Oversight**

The preparation of the OBC has been overseen by a project governance structure, managed and chaired by the Council, and comprising a project Steering Group and project Board. The Steering Group and Board is made up of partners and rail industry stakeholders and has representation from DfT, SYMCA, TfN, train operating companies such as Northern, and Network Rail.

2.5 A draft OBC was completed in December 2024 and shared with all partners on the project steering group for informal review and feedback. A log of all comments received has been prepared and the necessary amendments to the OBC made. A final draft of the OBC has been issued to partners and subsequently signed off at the January 2025 project Board meeting for submission to SYMCA.

2.6 **Outputs and Outcomes**

The Outline Business Case (OBC) presents a strong rationale for investing in a new Rotherham Gateway Station that will transform the regional and national connectivity of Rotherham, catalysing a new Innovation Campus around the station based on the advanced manufacturing strengths of both the borough and South Yorkshire.

2.7 Rotherham Gateway Station, consisting of new mainline platforms, a tram-train stop and associated station area development, will make a direct contribution to delivering each of the Government's five missions, with particular benefit for some of Rotherham's most deprived communities.

2.8 The economic benefits arising from the new station are significant. Redevelopment of the area immediately around the new station on its own would be expected to generate a significant number of new jobs. These economic benefits alone suggest that the project would offer high value for money and the relationship between the provision of a new station and these benefits is clear.

2.9 However, the traditional transport benefits that have been assessed for the project to date, are limited. The approach required by the rail industry uses the existing timetable to assess the services that could stop at a new station, rather than those that *should* stop to maximise the benefits of the investment. This has resulted in the weak transport benefits.

2.10 If benefits had been appraised using a potential 2030 timetable (anticipated station opening date), a more realistic assessment of what services could be accommodated at the new station would have been provided. The transport benefits set out within the OBC need to be seen in this context.

2.11 **Next Steps**

The next stage for the project is to proceed to detailed design for the Rotherham Gateway Station, which includes the mainline station, tram-train stop and wider station 'floormat' (car parking, pick up, drop off facilities etc.), and to ready the project for procurement. This is the equivalent of a 'Decision to Design' within the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline – alongside the preparation of a Full Business Case (FBC). The estimated cost of completing this next stage of development work is £11.35m.

2.12 Dialogue with SYMCA and DfT regarding the level of funding needed to complete the next stage development work, and use of Rotherham's CRSTS programme funding has been agreed in principle. Officers are currently working with SYMCA colleagues to secure the necessary approvals. This will be undertaken whilst the OBC is going through SYMCA's assurance process and completed in advance of the MCA Board approval, anticipated in June 2025.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 RMBC could consider not submitting the OBC at this time. However, this would negatively impact the critical path of the mainline station development and would carry reputational risk to the Council. It would delay the overall programme for scheme delivery and risk losing CRSTS funds, allocated for the Full Business Case.
- 3.2 It is recommended that submission to SYMCA of the Outline Business Case is approved, to further progress the Station scheme to maintain project momentum and secure the funding required to progress to Full Business Case.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 There has been considerable engagement with stakeholders and project partners through the monthly meetings of Integrated Station Steering Group and the Integrated Station Board. They have contributed to, and guided, the preparation of the Outline Business Case and other project workstreams including the Masterplan and land acquisitions.
- 4.2 Engagement has also taken place with local and regional stakeholders and internal and external Boards - including local business, education, and community partners. Letters of support have been provided by these organisations demonstrating the wide-spread endorsement of the scheme. The Town Deal Board has been updated regularly on the project and is supportive of the scheme.
- 4.3 Events such as the Rotherham Show have provided a platform for sharing plans and obtaining feedback from local people regarding the town's regeneration proposals including the Station.
- 4.4 As part of the OBC, a Stakeholder and Communications Plan has been prepared. This outlines future opportunities for engagement with partners, public consultation and wider promotion of the scheme and associated benefits. Further detailed, technical engagement with partners and public consultation will be undertaken as part of the Full Business Case preparation.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1	Draft OBC prepared and draft issued to stakeholders for informal review	4 December 2024
	Stakeholder/partner informal review and feedback end	2 January 2025
	Station Board sign off OBC for submission to SYMCA	22 January 2025
	Officer decision and Authorisation to Bid approved	7 February 2025
	OBC submitted to SYMCA for assurance and to DfT's Centre of Excellence ahead of formal submission	14 February 2025
	SYMCA Programme Board	2 April 2025
	MCA Board decision	10 June 2025
	Submission to DfT for assurance and ministerial decision	Earliest Mid-June 2025
	DfT process and ministerial decision	TBC

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

6.1 The OBC has been fully funded by SYMCA. The cost of the next stage, the FBC, is estimated to be £11.35m and work is underway to secure funding for this. Any changes to current funding streams and any bids for new funding will have to follow all relevant internal approval routes and those required by the awarding organisation.

6.2 All procurement activity must be undertaken in compliance with the relevant legislation applicable to the route to market option selected following completion of the procurement strategy. This would be either the Procurement Contract Regulations (2015) as amended, or the Procurement Regulations 2024.

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

7.1 The recommendations of this report are in accordance with previous decisions of the Council and the Council's constitution. There are no substantive legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from the recommendations outlined in the report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 None.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The initial equalities screening indicates that there will be no negative impact on equalities resulting from the submission of the OBC.

10.2 For the design and delivery of the station, a comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment (EqDIA) will be produced for DfT consideration as part of their assurance process. This will also be made available to internal teams and partners for review and the implications and opportunities arising from the EqDIA will inform the detailed design to be undertaken as part of the Full Business Case preparation.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 The decision to submit the OBC does not impact carbon emissions. During this stage of the scheme, there may be a small amount of increased travel activity from council staff and partners should site visits be requested; however, this impact will be minimal.

11.2 For the design and delivery of the station, a Carbon Management Plan will be produced for DfT consideration as part of their assurance process. This will also be made available to internal teams and partners for review and the implications and opportunities identified in the plan will inform the detailed design to be undertaken as part of the Full Business Case preparation.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1. Partners have been heavily involved in the development of the OBC and have approved submission of the OBC to SYMCA and DfT at this time. They are also aware of the progression of the project from OBC to FBC and the resource/governance implications for their respective organisations.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 **Risk:** SYMCA require clarifications on the OBC, delaying submission to DfT.

Mitigation: The Council has worked closely with all stakeholders, including SYMCA, throughout the OBC preparation to ensure it meets the requirements of the assuring bodies. A draft document was issued to partners in December and comments have been incorporated.

13.2 **Risk:** The OBC is not approved by SYMCA and DfT for next stage development funding (FBC).

Mitigation: DfT and SYMCA have been involved during the OBC preparation and are aware of its content. Dialogue with SYMCA and DfT regarding the level of funding needed to complete the next stage development work, and use of Rotherham's CRSTS programme funding has been agreed in principle. Officers are currently working with SYMCA colleagues to secure the necessary approvals.

13.3 **Risk:** Partial funding allocated for FBC.

Mitigation: Reduced scope for the FBC will need to be agreed and options for additional funding explored.

14. Accountable Officers

Lorna Vertigan, Head of Regeneration

Simon Moss, Assistant Director Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.

Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.
--	----------------	--------------------------------

Report Author: Lucy Mitchell, Regeneration Manager
lucy.mitchell@rotherham.gov.uk

This report is published on the Council's [website](#).