

New Sunderland bridge could help create 6,000 jobs



How the new Wear bridge could look. Below, Coun Robert Oliver.
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THE new Wear bridge will unlock 6,000 jobs and generate £4 for every £1 it costs to build, the Government has been told.

Transport Secretary Justine Greening has come under pressure from her own party to release funding for Wearside's landmark bridge.

The project was caught up in the Coalition Government's spending review, and a final decision on £82.5million requested for the project by Sunderland City Council is due in the coming weeks.

Now Sunderland Conservatives leader Robert Oliver has written to Ms Greening calling on her to release the cash.

He told the Minister: "We need investment from the Government to start the project but can promise a return of more than £4 for every £1 invested – a very good deal for the taxpayer.



“The project has the potential to unlock around 6,000 jobs, vital to both the regional and national economy.”

Coun Oliver said the new bridge would stimulate the economy and the “effect of a landmark structure” would provide a massive boost to the area.

“The benefits go beyond transport,” he added. “Sunderland is placing itself at the heart of a manufacturing revival focused on the low-carbon economy and was recently chosen as the location for one of the first Enterprise Zones.

“The New Wear Crossing will connect the Enterprise Zone along the A19 with the Port of Sunderland providing a gateway to Europe and access to the off-shore wind industry.”

Coun Oliver said the project can form a key part of the Government’s plan to expand the private sector and encourage growth through capital projects as it will “unlock millions of pounds of private sector investment and acres of brownfield regeneration for employment, housing and manufacturing”.

“We also hope that Sunderland’s New Wear Crossing will become the most recognised landmark in the North East, putting Sunderland on the map and signalling our ambition to deliver a prosperous city at the cutting-edge of a modern low-carbon economy,” he added.

“This is a shovel-ready project which can be up and running quickly and can be completed by 2015.

“Like the Angel of the North in Gateshead, the landmark bridge would lift not only the spirit of the city but also its status.”

I The Government is to reveal plans for a £30billion boost to Britain’s infrastructure.

The decade-long programme is intended to lever in £20billion of private investment from pension funds for roads, railways and high-speed broadband.