

## **Matter 6: Transport**

### **Main Issue: Whether the Council's strategy for accommodating transport infrastructure is sound?**

#### *Questions:*

#### **a) Are the transport schemes contained in the DPDs evidence based? How do they provide for the management of traffic movements in Lancaster City Centre (policies SP10 and SG4)?**

- 6A.1 The evidence base for transport stems from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2011-2021. The LTP establishes the overarching strategy for the county and is prepared by the local highway authority via statutory process. The strategy seeks to support economic growth and access to employment, making roads safer, tackling congestion and bringing forward new development to shape travel and transport within the county.
- 6A.2 Whilst the LTP is still a statutory document we do recognise that national transport policy has changed significantly since then. This will be rectified in the emerging Local Transport Plan 4 which is due for completion and full adoption in 2020.
- 6A.3 The change in transport policy at a national level was recognised in the suite of H&TMP's that Lancashire County Council has produced more recently. These documents are detailed and project led and provides an evidence based framework bringing together aspects of spatial planning, transport planning and economic development. The Lancaster H&TMP was the final masterplan completed, adopted in October 2016. Because of this, in many respects, the Lancaster Highways and Transport masterplan is more in line with national transport policy and frameworks than LTP3. This is acknowledged in the emerging LTP4 which is being developed very much in line with the structure and narrative of the Lancaster Highways and Transport masterplan.
- 6A.4 In this regard it is important to note that although the Lancaster Highways and Transport masterplan is not a statutory document, it has been through a process of engagement, public and stakeholder consultation and full political sign off as if it were a statutory document. This process included a nine week public consultation on the draft Lancaster H&TMP between 23 March and 22 May 2015. As part of this process views were sought from District Councils, Members, Stakeholders, District and Parish Councils and members of the public. Comments and views received as part of the consultation were fully recorded and detailed in a consultation report that was submitted as part of the final Lancaster H&TMP and subsequently

incorporated into the Local Plan as Policy DM63 of the Development Management DPD.

- 6A.5 To further demonstrate understanding of the local network, consultants WYG were commissioned by the city council in early 2018 in the form of a Local Plan Transport Assessment. The purpose of this has not been to consider major infrastructure but to take a fixed point approach looking at junctions individually. The studies have been prepared with extensive engagement from Lancashire County Council as Local Highways Authority and have incorporated feedback as best possible from Highways England in respect of potential impacts on the strategic highway network.
- 6A.6 The outcomes of this assessment are in two reports, the first which considers the capacity of key junctions along the network under current conditions and with and without development in future years 2023 and 2033. The report identifies a number of specific capacity concerns at each scenario and assessment year. This work reinforces existing understanding of the limitations of the local highway network to accommodate significant future growth without a range of interventions.
- 6A.7 The second report considers further some of key junctions and undertakes an engineering-led exercise to demonstrate that it is possible to accommodate additional development related traffic as anticipated might be generated by the draft allocations of the SP&LA in what could be termed a 'worst-case traffic scenario.' Options relating to these have been fed into the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule and within the strategic site viability appraisals. The ambition to better facilitate sustainable travel modes and achieve modal shift on a wider scale is central to the joint ambitions of the city and county councils. While part two of the WYG report presents isolated deliverable engineering solutions to *meet* travel demand, other options to better *manage* travel demand developments will be preferred. Developments will need to evidence how they in particular support policies SP10 and SG4 of the SP&LA and further policies DM59-63 of the Development Management DPD.
- 6A.8 The Strategic Policies and Land Allocations (SP&LA) DPD has been prepared to deliver sustainable economic growth for the district, reflecting for opportunities identified in the H&TMP to deliver a range of complementary infrastructure schemes to collectively support growth by addressing congestion, tackling air quality and wider environmental and place-making concerns. Policy SP10 (paragraph 11.9 of the SP&LA) outlines a number of transport projects, as per the H&TMP, that present a range of measures that balance increasing road capacity and driving modal shift to more sustainable travel patterns.

The latter is particularly key in the management of traffic movements in Lancaster's historic city centre where capacity is constrained. SP10 makes a requirement that development should be fitting to the H&TMP and further that financial contributions may be required to help deliver solutions.

6A.9 Policy SG4 of the SP&LA DPD articulates the ambition for Lancaster city centre and recognises that alongside the infrastructure articulated in SP10, there is a need to manage private vehicular demand, including via the provision of off-street car parking in the city centre (Lancaster City Council) and with consideration to supporting the Park and Ride offer at Junction 34 (Lancashire County Council).

6A.10 Work on a Parking Strategy and Action Plan for Lancaster and Morecambe has already commenced to support this. Further, this will feed into a Movement Strategy for the city centre as identified in SG4 and in the H&TMP. The Movement Strategy is recognised by both councils as a key document to manage traffic movements in the city centre. Given the constraints of the historic centre, it is recognised that to achieve a reliable transport network over the long term there is likely to be a need for significant modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport including bus, cycling and walking. The Movement Strategy will articulate how this should be achieved and a draft of this document should be made available for consultation in late 2019 in tandem with the draft Lancaster South Area Action Plan due to the interdependency of city centre and south Lancaster movement patterns. The options for these will be grounded in the strategic policy framework and further evidence work and will help support development over the latter years of the plan.

6A.11 To improve the clarity of policy SP10 it may be necessary to add a sentence: 'Where strategic developments are likely to result in traffic impacts that will require mitigation in the form of projects identified in the Highways and Transport Masterplan, funding will be sought via developer contributions.'

**b) Has adequate consultation taken place with stakeholders in respect of policy T1 Lancaster Park and Ride?**

6B.1 The creation of a Park and Ride offer at Junction 34 of the M6 was a requirement of the Heysham M6 Link Road Development Consent Order 2013 (Statutory Instrument, Schedule 2, item 5) and has been operational since December 2016. Patronage is slowly growing and both county and city councils are working together to identify means of further promoting the offer and patronage here, including consideration of the relationship with the city centre parking offer and via relevant development opportunities within the district.

- 6B.2 Item 6b of the Statutory Instrument further requires investigation into the extension of the Park and Ride network beyond Junction 34. Following stakeholder and public consultation, the H&TMP identifies a vision for a 'Y-shaped' bus rapid transit network of two routes within the district, one arm linking Heysham and Morecambe to South Lancaster via the city centre and the other incorporating the Park and Ride service to link M6 Junction 34 to Lancaster University.
- 6B.3 Policy SG1 of the SP&LA DPD defines that seeking a modal shift in local transport movements between South Lancaster and Lancaster city centre will be at the heart of planning and development for Bailrigg Garden Village. Delivery of a bus rapid transit (BRT) system between South Lancaster and the city centre will therefore be further explored as part of preparation of the Lancaster South Area Action Plan (LSAAP), alongside a range of other transport options, including incorporating the southern arm of the BRT with a Park and Ride in the vicinity of Junction 33. Policy T1 indicatively safeguards land for this facility in recognition of the strategic role it could play in supporting sustainable growth in south Lancaster. As well as being considered further as part of the LSAAP, further opportunity for public and stakeholder input will be via preparation of the movement and parking strategies.
- 6B.4 The proposal for a park & ride facility was also a specific proposal contained within the consultation process of the Lancaster H&TMP. As part of the consultation, stakeholders were asked the question "how strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposal for a South Lancaster Park and Ride/Cycle facility at the relocated junction?" Of those that responded to the question 68% agreed with the statement. Further details can be found within the Lancaster H&TMP consultation report available at <http://council.lancashire.gov.uk/documents/s96516/Appendix%20B.pdf>
- c) Can the Council clarify what is meant by a cycling and walking superhighway in policy T2?**
- 6C.1 The Cycle Superhighway is a proposed dedicated cycle route between the Lancaster South Area of Growth and Lancaster City Centre.
- 6C.2 The Cycle Superhighway is identified as a strategic route in the Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan published by the County Council. It will provide a useable and attractive north/south route between the site and the main trip attractors located within the city. The proposal forms part of the broader range of infrastructure measures identified in the Masterplan, which will provide the necessary infrastructure to encourage modal shift.
- 6C.3 Further details regarding the route and design of the Cycle Superhighway will emerge as part of the Lancaster South Area Action Plan.

**d) Are policies DM59 (Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages), DM60 (Walking and Cycling) and DM62 (Transport Efficiency and Travel Plans) in accordance with the policies of the NPPF?**

Policy DM59: Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages

- 6D.1 Policy DM59 sets out the broad spatial approach that seeks to ensure sustainable patterns of development and reflects the approach set out in paragraphs 30, 34 and 38 of the 2012 NPPF. The policy allows flexibility in terms of location, in particular criterion (IV) of Policy DM59 sets out how different approaches may be required in rural areas.
- 6D.2 Criteria (I) to (VIII) of Policy DM 59 relate to and are consistent with paragraphs 32 and 35 of the 2012 NPPF. These seek to exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport and ensure safe and suitable access to all parts of the community.
- 6D.3 The last paragraph of Policy DM59 describes the circumstances in which planning permission is likely to be refused on transport grounds. The Council consider that this reflects the last bullet point of paragraph 32 of the 2012 NPPF which sets out circumstances where proposals may be refused. However, should the Inspector consider that the wording within the NPPF provides greater clarity on this matter then the Council is willing to provide alternative wording reflecting the text in paragraph 32.
- 6D.4 The Council would agree that Policy DM59 does not seek to take account of ultra-low emission vehicles. The Council would point out that this matter is addressed via other areas of policy contained in the Reviewed Development Management DPD, specifically criterion (XVIII) of Policy DM29 (relating to the Design of Development) and Policy DM31 (relating to Air Quality management and Pollution). The Council are comfortable that this matter is satisfactorily addressed within the plan and in accordance with the direction of the NPPF.
- 6D.5 In all other respects, the Council consider that policy DM59 is in accordance with the NPPF, more specifically paragraphs 29-41 of the NPPF.

Policy DM60: Walking and Cycling

- 6D.6 The first part of Policy DM60 reflects paragraphs 30 and 35 of the NPPF and ensures development proposals take account of the pedestrian environment and are located where pedestrian access can be maximised.
- 6D.7 The third paragraph of Policy DM60 refers to development generating significant footfall being located within central or highly accessible locations. This reflects paragraph 30 of the NPPF and the Council consider it clearly sets out how sustainable patterns of development can be achieved. Paragraph 34 of the NPPF provides a broader approach and refers to developments that generate significant movement being located where sustainable transport modes can be maximised.

- 6D.8 The second part of Policy DM60 relates to cycling infrastructure. These three paragraphs reflect, and are in accordance with, paragraphs 30, 32 and 35 of the NPPF.
- 6D.9 It should be noted that further work on cycling and walking infrastructure has been undertaken by this Council and the County Council to provide further clarity and detail and assist in the implementation of schemes. This reflects the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of paragraph 35 of the 2012 NPPF and the increased focus of creating networks set out in the revised NPPF (para 104 (d)).
- 6D.10 More specifically, the County Council is preparing a Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the district. This will comprise a network plan for cycling and walking and a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements. The LCWIP will encompass ongoing work relating to the Lancaster South Area Action Plan (cycle superhighway) and proposed network improvements relating to the remaining strategic housing sites (North Lancaster, East Lancaster, South Carnforth) set out in an emerging Planning Advisory Note (PAN).
- 6D.11 The draft PAN has been subject to stakeholder consultation and identifies the type and location of infrastructure necessary to ensure sites connect in to the existing cycling and walking network. The PAN supports the master planning approach for each of the sites and the relevant Statements of Common Ground.
- 6D.12 Should the Inspector request, the Council would be happy to provide further details on the outcomes of this joint working with Lancashire County Council and the ongoing preparation of the planning advisory note.

Policy DM62: Transport Efficiency and Travel Plans

- 6D.13 Policy DM62 aims to direct development to sustainable locations and sets out when and how the use of Travel Assessments and Travel Plans should be used. For information the Council are in agreement with the Local Highways Authority that the title of the policy would be better worded "Facilitating Sustainable Modes of Travel and Travel Plans" to reflect its purpose.
- 6D.14 The second paragraph of Policy DM62 directs development to sustainable locations, particularly those generating a high number of trips, and is consistent with paras 30 and 34 of the NPPF. The policy also states that mitigation will be required where road network capacity is exceeded.
- 6D.15 The third paragraph of Policy DM62 reflects paragraph 32 and the need for Transport Assessments/Statements, the details of which will be appropriate to the scale and impact of the proposed development. Paragraph 32 also sets out the circumstances where proposals should be refused on transport grounds. It should be noted that the Council has considered this specifically under Policy DM59 Enhancing Accessibility and Transport Linkages.
- 6D.16 The final two paragraphs of Policy DM62 are consistent with paragraph 36 of the NPPF and reflect the need for proposals with significant impacts to provide a Travel Plan.

6D.16 The Council consider that the approach set out under Policy DM62 is consistent with the NPPF, specifically paragraphs 30, 32, 34 and 36.

**e) Is the evidence for policy DM61 (Vehicle Parking Provision) up-to-date and would it provide sufficient flexibility to deliver the desired reduction in private car use?**

6E.1 In preparing the Local Plan, the Council have made use of the parking standards which have been prepared by Lancashire County Council (the local highway authority). Whilst it is recognised that these standards have now been in circulation for some time (the County Council originally published in 2005 Lancashire Joint Structure Plan adopted March 2005) the City Council believe that they remain a sound basis for vehicle parking requirements and are still used by a significant number of local planning authorities across Lancashire, providing a consistent approach to this matter across the sub-region. Indeed these standards have recently been adopted in local plans in Wyre, Burnley and are the same standards being progressed by Rossendale.

6E.2 The Council believe that Policy DM61 of the Reviewed Development Management DPD, and the standards provided to accompany them, provide sufficient flexibility and opportunity to promote modal shifts away from merely a reliance on private car. This is particularly the case in locations which are already accessible to alternative forms of transport. This is particularly the case when considering schemes against the Development Management DPD as a whole, particularly in the context of Policies DM59 and DM60.

6E.3 However, it is recognised that there should be reference to the term 'maximum parking standards,' as part of Appendix E. Alternative standards may be used which seek to ensure a modal shift in the South Lancaster area as part of the emerging AAP.

**f) Would policy DM63 (Lancaster District Highways and Transport Masterplan) be inconsistent with the Highways and Transport Masterplan?**

6F.1 In relation to future transport and highways matters in the district, as referred to in Matter 6 (a) the City Council considers the Lancaster District Highways and Transport Masterplan (adopted in October 2016) as a critical element of evidence.

6F.2 In the context of Policy DM63, this policy seeks to provide only a distillation of the transport vision contained within the masterplan and make applicants aware of the implications of the masterplan. The Council does not consider that the direction of DM63 is incompatible with, or inconsistent with the direction given in the Highways and Transport Masterplan.

**Appendix 1 Lancaster Emerging Local Plan – Consideration of Comments Received on the Local Plan Transport Assessment by WYG (Reference LCC7.6.1)**