
DARLINGTON'S SECOND LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Nick Wallis,
Highways and Transport Portfolio**

Responsible Director(s) - John Buxton, Director of Development and Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval to consult on the emerging issues for the preparation of the Second Local Transport Plan.

Information and Analysis

2. The Local Transport Plan is the delivery mechanism for the shared priority for transport agreed by the Government and the Local Government Association. It is a statutory document and, in Darlington, underpins the delivery of the Community Strategy. It secures capital funding for transport infrastructure improvements, based on a formulaic approach, and performance funding based on assessment.
3. In December the Department for Transport published the final guidance for the production of the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP)

Timetable

4. The Second Local Transport Plan will cover the period 2006-2011. The Plan to be submitted on 29 July 2005 will be a Provisional Plan and the deadline for the Final Second Local Transport Plan is 31 March 2006. In addition an Annual Progress Report will be submitted in July 2005 for the progress achieved in 2004/05 and in July 2006 for the progress achieved during the period of the First Local Transport Plan (2001-2006).

Content

5. The guidance summarises how to develop a high quality 2LTP.
6. It will set transport in its wider context – a cross cutting corporate document, set within local, regional and national strategies and developed in partnership with relevant stakeholders.
7. It will contain locally relevant targets – outcome targets supporting targets for housing, jobs, social inclusion and the environment and focussed on the transport shared priorities agreed between Government and the Local Government Association.
8. It will demonstrate value for money – solutions will be based on evidence, will make best use of existing infrastructure and will include innovative solutions that do not rely on capital

investment alone.

9. It will contain indicators and trajectories for performance reporting – targets and trajectories for key outcome indicators and other targets to reflect the delivery of the solutions in the plan.
10. The 2LTP will demonstrate its contribution to delivering the shared priorities, agreed between the Government and Local Government Association. The shared priority for transport includes improving accessibility and public transport and reducing the problems of congestion, pollution and safety. The Plan will therefore need to demonstrate how each initiative or intervention contributes to Tackling Congestion, Improving Accessibility, Safer Roads and Air Quality. In addition the Plan should demonstrate how it contributes to other Quality of Life issues such as health, neighbourhood renewal, quality of public space, climate change and noise
11. Separate guidance has been issued for accessibility planning. A Framework Accessibility Strategy is required for July 2005 and the Final Accessibility Strategy will be submitted with the Final 2LTP on 31 March 2006.
12. Accessibility planning techniques are wide ranging in scope and can be used to develop effective transport services for all sections of the community. The ability of people to access places of work, learning, health care, shopping, leisure and exercise can significantly impact on their quality of life. Schemes and initiatives to improve accessibility can encourage participation and retention in education, reduce inequalities in health, and help people move from welfare into work. Accessibility planning will require involvement from all departments within the Council as well as a wide range of external organisations. Following an assessment and analysis of accessibility issues, initiatives will need to be identified to address the issues, and may include reducing the cost of travel, improving travel information, improving physical access, addressing crime and the fear of crime and improving the walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure and services.
13. The new EC Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment, which has been implemented in England via Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633 will apply to all second round LTPs required by statute.

Finance

14. In order to assist with the 2LTP the Department for Transport has issued planning guidelines. These provide the financial parameters to the plan to ensure that each authority produces realistic plans with costed schemes and can demonstrate value for money. The 2LTP is not a bidding document, as was the case for the first LTP and the initial planning guideline for Darlington is £14.27m. Details of the planning guideline for Darlington can be found in the financial implications section.
15. The guidance also details the assessment process for the 2LTP. The Department for Transport will provide additional funding for authorities that score highly. This performance based assessment will be scored on 3 elements as follows:
 - (a) Quality of planning - assessment to be made in 2005 based on the Provisional 2LTP.
 - (b) Impact of LTP targets – assessment to be made in 2006 based on Final 2LTP.

- (c) Deliverability – assessment to be made in 2006 based on track record of delivering the first local transport plan over the whole 5 year period. (An assessment of 2004/05 delivery reported in APR in July 2005, will also be made in 2005 to inform the 2006/07 allocations)

- 16. The assessments worth 50%, 30% and 20% respectively will be summed and weighted to provide a final score, which will define the final funding allocation for the Plan period.

Strategy

- 17. The transport strategies, policies and initiatives developed and implemented for the First Local Transport Plan are being reviewed. The guidance from the Department for Transport and the issues emerging from the stakeholder consultation will inform the development of the draft Transport Strategy for consideration by Cabinet in June 2005.
- 18. The delivery of the long-term vision for transport will be achieved through the combination of the Local Transport Plan and The Town on the Move project, combining capital and revenue expenditure.
- 19. The Plan should also contain or refer to a Road Safety Strategy, Bus Strategy and Accessibility Strategy.

Process

- 20. The proposed process for the production of the Provisional 2LTP and framework accessibility strategy contains 4 elements:
 - (a) Key stakeholder consultation
 - (b) Town on the Move research
 - (c) Travel Summit
 - (d) General public
- 21. Steer Davies Gleave, transport consultants, were appointed in October to undertake consultation with key stakeholders. This consultation has included 30 one-to-one interviews, workshops and focus groups. Participants have included councillors, officers, transport providers, interest groups and Darlington Partnership. The results of this initial consultation are **attached (see Appendix)** but the key findings are as follows:
 - (a) Congestion is seen as the most significant problem.
 - (b) A recognition that congestion needs to be addressed through improving facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and users of public transport, as well as changing attitudes to travel through better promotion and information about peoples travel choices.
 - (c) Accessibility is seen as the most important aim of the 2LTP, particularly focussing on the needs of the more deprived people/areas.
 - (d) Improving air quality and safety are not seen as a high priority.
 - (e) The broader concept of travel safety, referring to all modes and relating to the quality of the public realm, is seen as more useful than road safety and provides a good link to the Community safety element of the Community Strategy.
- 22. Additional research undertaken as part of the Town on the Move project will also inform the development of the 2LTP. This will include 4000 household surveys providing travel

behaviour information and 400 in-depth interviews providing information on attitudes to travel choices. This research undertaken by Sustrans and Socialdata will be available at the end of February 2005.

23. In order to further define the priorities and explore the potential solutions in greater detail the final two stages of the consultation need to be undertaken.
24. The Travel Summit in March will provide a third element to the consultation, involving a wide range of key stakeholders, councillors and key officers.
25. The final stage of the consultation process is to invite members of the public to provide feedback on the key issues that have been drawn out through the initial consultation. This consultation will be undertaken through the Town Crier in March.
26. Steer Davies Gleave will then provide a final report, which will be submitted as supporting evidence in the draft provisional 2LTP to Cabinet in June 2005.
27. A draft provisional 2LTP will be brought to Environment Scrutiny Committee on 28 April 2005 and then to Cabinet on 14 June 2005 (provisional date) and Council on 7 July 2005 (provisional date) for Members consideration.

Financial Implications

28. The Department for Transport (DfT) has published provisional planning guidelines for the amount of integrated and capital maintenance block funding that this Council will receive during the 2LTP period to aid realistic planning.

Maintenance Block

29. This block is for maintenance of both roads and bridges. It is based on the relative size of the latest national backlog figures. More funding is being allocated on the basis of bridges and non-principal road conditions, than on principal road condition
30. In Darlington the confirmed indicative allocation for 2006/07 is £1.025m.
31. The provisional planning guidelines are as follows (£m):

2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
1.025	1.045	1.097	1.152	1.210

Integrated Block

32. The planning guidelines for the integrated block reflect Darlington's total share of the total indicative allocations to this block for the period 2001/02 to 2005/06. i.e. these guidelines simply 'roll forward' the pattern of allocations made in recent years. The provisional planning guidelines are as follows (£m):

2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
1.646	1.646	1.728	1.815	1.906

33. DfT will confirm revised planning guidelines during 2005 for the block from 2007/08 onwards incorporating a new formulaic approach.

Outcome of Consultation

34. Steer Davies Gleave, Transport Consultants, were appointed in October 2004 to undertake consultation with officers, councillors and key stakeholders. The final draft report is **attached**.

Legal Implications

35. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

36. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

37. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

Decision Deadline

38. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter. It is proposed that a draft provisional 2LTP will be brought to Environment Scrutiny Committee on 28 April 2005 and then to Cabinet on 14 June 2005 (provisional date) and Council on 7 July 2005 (provisional date) for Members consideration.

Key Decisions

39. In accordance with the Council's Constitution this matter is classed as a Key Decision and has been advertised in the Forward Plan as the Plan affects all wards in the Borough.

Recommendation

40. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees the next stage of consultation be undertaken at the Travel Summit and with the general public in March on the emerging issues as set out in this report.

Reasons

41. The recommendations are supported so as to be able to consult on the emerging issues and potential solutions to inform the development of the draft Provisional 2LTP.

John Buxton
Director of Development and Environment

Background Papers

Consultations for Second Local Transport Plan; Final draft report; produced by Steer Davies Gleave; January 2005.

Sue Dobson : Extension 2277
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Summary of stakeholder consultation for second local transport plan

Consultations with a range of stakeholders have been conducted during November and December to aid the development of the second Local Transport Plan (2LTP) strategy¹.

This report provides recommendations for the development of the LTP strategy based upon those consultations and considerations of Government policy and requirements for 2LTP.

The principles of the draft strategy on which we have consulted are:

- The strategy will focus on the Government's 4 shared priorities of accessibility, congestion, road safety and air quality;
- The 8 objectives of the Community Strategy will be used to provide local steer;
- The strategy will be written around journey purposes in order to ensure that accessibility drives the 2LTP strategy and proposals remain focused on people's travel needs;
- The strategy will be integrated with *A Town on the Move*, Darlington's sustainable travel town project.

The strengths of this approach are:

- It helps set transport in its wider context and identifies cross-cutting links with other areas as well as opportunities for partnership. In particular, it provides strong links with the Community Strategy.
- By focusing on people's journey needs and travel choices, it places accessibility at the heart of the LTP and the role of softer measures such as education, awareness-raising and marketing is made more prominent, rather than just physical schemes;
- By integrating *A Town on the Move* and the 2LTP, it ensures consistency between these programmes and a balanced, sustainable transport strategy.

The feedback from consultees on the strategy priorities are:

- Congestion is seen as the most significant ***problem*** (and one that will get considerably worse under expected future trends). Most stakeholders accept that Darlington cannot 'build its way out of trouble': they believe there isn't enough capacity in the system to accommodate ever higher levels of traffic.

¹ The transport consultancy Steer Davies Gleave was appointed by Darlington Borough Council to undertake stakeholder consultation for the Second Local Transport Plan (2LTP). The results reported are based on consultations they conducted as follows: Face to face interviews with 29 stakeholders, telephone interviews with 2 stakeholders and workshop sessions with 6 interest groups. In addition, 4 focus groups were held with specific target groups of the general public to explore their views. Summaries of the consultations, together with a longer presentation of findings and a "long-list" of issues and measures raised by consultees are available from Sue Dobson, Transport Policy Officer, DBC.

- Therefore, congestion has to be addressed through improving alternative modes and through changing attitudes towards transport: some limited traffic management measures to improve flow of traffic could help, but cannot solve the problem on its own.
- Accessibility is seen as most important *aim* of LTP, particularly focusing on the needs of more deprived people / areas;
- Improving safety and air quality are not as high a priority (not as significant problems) and it is felt that in addressing the first 2 shared priorities, it will make a positive contribution to these objectives
- The broader concept of ‘travel safety’ – referring to all modes and relating to the quality of the public realm – is seen as more useful than ‘road safety’ and provides a good link with the Community Safety element of the Community Strategy.

There is a clear preferred strategy that reflects both Government guidance and requirements, and the views of the majority of stakeholders:

- The LTP should focus on tackling congestion and enhancing accessibility and do this primarily through improving walking, cycling and public transport;
- As well as physical improvements to these modes, there is a need to raise awareness and change attitudes towards these modes – which can be achieved through the joining up of *A Town on the Move* and the LTP;
- There should only be specific and modest attempts to increase general road capacity through minor traffic management improvements on the local road network. Trying to grow road capacity to accommodate all future growth is unachievable and unaffordable;
- However, significant investment on the strategic road network may be justified/required, in particular the A66 on the western side of Darlington to accommodate growth in regional traffic and divert through traffic round Darlington (this is outside the scope of the 2LTP).

Implementing the preferred strategy carries several risks that need to be minimised and managed:

- By prioritising spend on alternatives to car travel, it could be perceived as being anti-car: the message needs to be disseminated that this approach is needed to attract people out of their cars for appropriate journeys that can be made by alternative modes in order to ensure that congestion doesn’t worsen in the long-term;
- The ability of improving the bus product under current regulatory framework: the need to work in partnership with several operators could mean improvements take a long time to implement; are the operators capable/committed to delivering a stepchange in quality?;
- Attitudes: there is a risk that people will not be prepared to choose alternative modes, so investment in these modes could be wasted – whilst congestion is viewed as bad locally, it is not sufficiently bad to make people change travel behaviour?;

- Implementation: delays in implementing 2LTP could lead to disillusionment with the ability of the Council and its partners to deliver the agreed strategy. Therefore, good programme management, budget control, monitoring systems and decisive political will, are needed to implement it. Maximising the impact of *A Town on the Move* relies on delivering LTP improvements in a timely manner;
- Ability to raise adequate funds for implementing the strategy: the planning guideline issued by Government gives only modest provisional funding for the LTP; whilst *A Town on the Move* enables complementary funding, especially revenue funding til 2008/09, there is no source of additional funding beyond this point.

Conclusion

Darlington is in an extremely strong position for development of 2LTP, given the consensus of stakeholders, the opportunities for partnership / existing partnerships with a wide-range of stakeholders, the strength of, and commitment to, the Community Strategy and the complementary funding and programme that will be implemented through *A Town on the Move*.

Given Government transport policy and funding limitations, there is little opportunity for 2LTP to do anything else other than the preferred strategy. We believe that if the Council acts decisively to implement 2LTP alongside *A Town on the Move*, Darlington could become the Government's showcase town for sustainable transport strategy over the medium term, gaining commensurate levels of funding and support.

Next steps on consultation

To finalise the stakeholder consultations project:

- Steer Davies Gleave to draft public consultation materials for Town Crier March edition;
- Steer Davies Gleave to present the LTP at "A Town on the Move" conference and to facilitate the workshops;
- Final reporting on consultations and recommendations to be provided by 8th April., to inform Provisional Second Local Transport plan for consideration by Scrutiny and Cabinet.