
OVERVIEW OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Highways and Transport Portfolio :-
 - (a) **Darlington Borough Council (Stonebridge and St. Cuthbert's Way) (Bus Lanes) Order 2005** – As part of the 'Pedestrian Heart' scheme, bus services in the town centre have been reviewed and changes to bus routes proposed. As a result of those proposals and, in order to maintain effective bus operations, a bus lane was proposed in the Stonebridge/St. Cuthbert's Way area, to which one objection was received. That objection was set aside by Cabinet at its meeting held on 18th January, 2005, as it was felt that should the objection be taken on board and the Order be amended it would be contrary to the objectives of the bus lane.
 - (b) **Prohibition of Driving Order Back Yarm Road North/Peel Street/Wesley Street and Wesley Street/Stanley Street** – Cabinet made permanent the Prohibition of Driving Order, which previously had experimental status. The order had been brought into effect, following concerns by residents about anti-social behaviour and speeding vehicles in the area. Residents in the area were consulted on the proposals with the majority who were directly affected by the scheme being in favour of its retention. The experimental scheme had pointed to a reduction in anti-social behaviour and an improvement in road safety for users of the back streets, especially children.
 - (c) **Local Transport Plan** – Cabinet gave approval for consultation to begin on the emerging issues in preparation of Darlington's Second Local Transport Plan to cover the period 2006 to 2011. The process for the production of the Provisional LTP contained four main elements, namely key stakeholder consultation; 'Town on the Move' research; the Travel Summit, which was held in March 2005; and the final part of the consultation taking place with the general public.
 - (d) **A66 Tees Valley Gateway Study** – The Council were consulted on a Study, undertaken on behalf of the North East Assembly, on the potential constraint to economic development imposed by the single carriageway section of the A66(T), linking the Tees Valley to the motorway network. It was agreed that they be informed that full dualling of the A66 would be the preferred scheme from this Council's viewpoint, in the long term, with the partial dualling being considered as an initial phase.
 - (e) **Darlington Borough Council - Town Centre 'Pedestrian Heart' Traffic Regulation Order 2005** – Members received a report on the objections received to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order required to bring into effect the traffic management works for the Town Centre 'Pedestrian Heart' scheme. Each of the objections were considered

and a number of amendments were made to the Traffic Regulation Order as a result of those objections.

- (f) **Developer Contributions for Transport** – Funds resulting from agreements with developers for investment in the local transport network of Darlington were released to allow those works to be undertaken.
- (g) **Darlington Transport Forum** – I chaired a meeting of the Darlington Transport Forum held on 24th January, 2005, at which reports on the A66(T) Tees Valley Gateway Study, West Park Hospital Travel Plan, Darlington’s Second Local Transport Plan and, an update on the Darlington ‘A Town on the Move’ initiative, were considered.
- (h) **Town on the Move Travel research** - The Council has received a report detailing the findings of the travel behaviour research undertaken between September and December 2004. Over 4250 residents took part in the research providing information on travel behaviour, attitudes to travel and transport planning and the potential for change. Attitudinal information was gathered through 60-minute interviews with a sub sample of 406 residents (aged 14 +).

It is worth noting that this travel survey provides the most comprehensive mobility data available to any local authority in the UK. A copy of the report is now available on the Town on the Move website, www.darlingtononthemove.org.uk

- (i) **Town on the Move Summit- Residents, business representatives transport experts and** community groups took part in the ‘Town on the Move – Local Travel Summit’ on the 15th & 16th March. A series of workshops on day one looked at issues around journeys to work, school, the shops, health care facilities, for leisure and for business. Day 2 of the summit looked in detailed at the potential for changing travel behaviour, best practice in the delivery of high quality pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure and the practical difficulties / opportunities in delivering schemes in Darlington.

Findings from the summit will be published in April in the Town on the Move newsletter.

On 17th March Darlington hosted the first national ‘ Making Smarter Choices Work’ sustainable travel towns conference.

- (j) **Town on the Move information, marketing and events** - The Town on the Move website (www.darlingtononthemove.org.uk) is now operational, this includes information on all aspects of travel in and around Darlington. An awareness raising campaign started in late February using a variety of advertising media to promote Town on the Move. This includes commercial radio, bus back and side adverts, bus shelter posters, advertising on car park tickets and a regular feature in the Town Crier. More specific and targeted campaigns are planned for May / June and the autumn, respectively promoting walking/cycling and public transport use. Working with colleagues in Leisure the Town on the Move project has published a ‘ pedal power’

pamphlet promoting an extensive programme of guided cycle rides. All cycling and walking events are published on the Town on the Move website.

- (k) **Town on the Move Pedestrian and Cycle audits** – Through a joint initiative with Sustrans and neighbouring Tees Valley local authorities Cycle City Guides have completed a cycle audit for Darlington. This looks at both the existing cycle network and the wider highway network, with a view to identifying key ‘missing’ cycle links and roads that are best suited to cycling. The results of the audit will benefit the Council with future planning of capital schemes to improve cycling facilities and later in 2005 will be used to pilot a **national cycle journey planning website** for Darlington. The national cycle journey planning website is funded by the Department for Transport.
- The Town on the Move team are also working with Living Streets (formerly know as the Pedestrian Association) on four community street audits, identifying improvements to key walking routes to the Town centre (Northgate, Duke Street, Parkgate) and a route to Cockerton shops.
- (l) **School Travel Survey**- On 19th January all of Darlington’s schools took part in a national ‘hands up’ travel survey. Pupils were asked, how they travelled to school on that day and how they usually travel to school. Results compare favourably to national statistics and show that 56 per cent of Darlington pupils walk to school compared to 48% nationally. 26% of children are driven to school compared to 29% nationally. Five per cent of pupils stated that they shared their car journey with a pupil other than a sibling. This is the first time that all schools have completed this survey, which will be repeated annually.
- (m) **School Travel Plans** – Seven schools are close to completing their travel plans, these are Heathfield, Dodmire, St Teresa’s, Bishopton Redmarshall, St Augustine’s Primary Schools, Dodmire Infants and Hummersknot Secondary School. (Heighington, Alderman Leach, Mount Pleasant primary Schools, Abbey Juniors and Abbey Infants already have a travel plan). Pupils from Hummersknott School attended the Town on the Move summit.
- (n) **Hurworth to Neasham Footway/Cycleway – Compulsory Purchase Order** – Construction is now well advanced.
- (o) **North Road Corridor of Certainty** -
- (i) Fitzwilliam Drive Traffic Calming – Phase 1 is complete. Phase 2 (Leyburn Road South) currently under construction.
 - (ii) Traffic Order for North Road Bus Lanes has been made and the bus lanes will be introduced on completion of the Northgate Bus Bay Scheme.
 - (iii) Northgate Bus Bay Scheme – work ongoing and programmed for completion by the end of April.

(p) **Yarm Road Corridor of Certainty -**

- (i) Engineering works on Parkgate from Neasham Road to Hargreave Terrace under construction.
- (ii) Remaining works on Parkgate, including upgraded and realigned Puffin crossing to commence on completion of the above in early May.

(q) **Other Schemes**

- (i) Carmel Road North Toucan – works nearing completion.
- (ii) Cleveland Street (Bridge) New Footway and Traffic Signals – works substantially complete.

(r) **Highway Maintenance Works** – various schemes are due to commence/have commenced/have been carried out since the last report.

(i) The following schemes have been commenced/are due to commence:

- Unc Denton – drainage works.
- C182 Thompson Street East – carriageway resurfacing.

(ii) The following schemes have been completed:

- A1150 Salters Lane North Phase 1 – kerbing/carriageway strengthening and resurfacing.
- A167 North Road – Ruby Street to Peabody Street – footpath works.
- B6280 Yarm Road – McMullen Road towards Morton Palms – carriageway surfacing.
- C182 Thompson Street West – North Road towards Cemetery – footpath works (south side).
- C182 Thompson Street East – The Leas to Davison Road – footpath works (north side).
- Unc The Fairway – footpath works (west side).
- C182 Thompson Street East – carriageway resurfacing.

(s) **Traffic Management & Road Safety Schemes:**

- (i) Ongoing works to provide dropped crossings for disabled persons at various locations in the town centre.
- (ii) Eggleston View additional traffic calming works have been completed.
- (iii) Cemetery Lane and River Skerne/Red Hall cycle route works have been completed.
- (iv) Desmond Way cycle route works are ongoing
- (v) The programme of 40 raised platforms at various bus stops throughout the town has been completed.
- (vi) Pedestrian refuge on Carmel Road South/Ravensdale Road has been completed.
- (vii) The first phase of the Newton Lane/Prior Street traffic calming/20 mph zone scheme has commenced.
- (viii) Consultations for traffic calming on Coombe Drive are ongoing.
- (ix) Consultations for Firthmoor traffic calming Stages 3 and 4 are ongoing.
- (x) Moray Drive Consultation has been carried out.
- (t) **Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity Initiatives** – a number of initiatives have been instigated including the following:
 - (i) Cycle Training Activities -
 - The first advanced cycle training scheme at Hummersknott Comprehensive is nearly completed with over 50 children receiving training.
 - (ii) Classroom Activities -
 - A series of six one hour lessons were delivered to children in Dodmire Infants School at the beginning of term to provide an intensive grounding in basic road safety.
 - A series of road safety sessions for pupils in the different key stages were delivered in conjunction with the move to the new Alderman Leach school
 - The Road Safety Officer took part in the annual road safety week at Harrowgate Hill Infants School.
 - (iii) Nursery Education -

- The successful 'People Who Help Us' programme continues to make children and parents aware of crossing roads safely and the importance of school crossing patrols.
 - A campaign highlighting road safety issues in winter weather was carried out in all registered nursery schools and playgroups.
- (iv) Parking Awareness Banner – A purpose made all weather banner highlighting parking on the zig-zag lines outside school has been provided to three schools with school gate parking problems.
- (u) **Bridgework Schemes:**
- (i) A167 Oxneyfield Bridge – construction underway.
 - (ii) Polam Lane Bridge – width restriction in place. Temporary strengthening completed.
 - (iii) Bates Avenue Stage 2 – works nearing completion.
 - (iv) Little Stainton Bridge – detailed design ongoing.
 - (v) Bishopton Bridge – further analysis being undertaken.
 - (vi) Barmpton Bridge – consultation with Environment Agency commenced.
 - (vii) Leadyard Bridge – outline design underway.

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