
DRAFT THIRD LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor David Lyonette, Transport Portfolio

Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present a draft Third Local Transport Plan as the basis for consultation during November and as the basis for the development of the Implementation Plan.

Summary

2. The national context for developing the Local Transport Plan has changed both in terms of policy and funding since the change in Government in May. There is still a great deal of uncertainty but in order to meet the statutory timescales for the Plan, work is continuing. The final Plan will be presented to Cabinet in February 2011 and Council in March 2011.
3. The development of the Tees Valley Strategy has also been delayed due to the change in policy direction and the withdrawal of funding for the continuation of the DaSTS¹ study work. There has been limited time to integrate this strategy into the Darlington Plan and further work may be required, in particular to integrate Tees Valley options with local options, in light of funding announcements.
4. The Plan has been developed following extensive consultation and examination by Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee.
5. Five goals have been developed which strategically fit with the national priorities of growing the economy and tackling carbon emissions, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed and the Local Development Framework. Key challenges that face the Borough and their implications for transport have been assessed. These were presented to Cabinet in March 2010 and Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee in June 2010.
6. A number of strategic choices and key policies have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and local people in response to the identified goals and challenges. The proposed consultation in November 2010 will seek to test the emerging transport strategy and seeks comments on the options that have been generated. (Paragraph 25 of the main report refers.)

¹ Delivering a Sustainable Transport System: Consultation on Planning for 2014 and beyond, DfT, November 2008

7. The final stage of the process will appraise the options using a multi criteria matrix and then an Implementation Plan drafted, with a detailed delivery programme for 2011/2012 and an indicative programme for the following 2-4 years depending on how many years of planning guideline DfT provides. This will be presented to Cabinet in February 2011 for adoption as policy by Council in March 2011.
8. A copy of the draft Third Local Transport Plan is in **Appendix 1** and further information on consultation is in **Appendix 2**.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that the final stage of consultation is undertaken on the basis of the draft Third Local Transport Plan detailed in this report, in particular noting the strategic choices and options. This will inform the Implementation Plan, together with the funding once it is announced in December 2010.

Reasons

10. The recommendation is supported in order to engage local people and stakeholders in the development of the Third Local Transport Plan and to meet out statutory duty to prepare a Local Transport Plan, including the Implementation Plan by April 2011, in light of the late announcements of funding allocations.

Richard Alty
Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)

Background Papers

- (i) Local Transport Plan guidance; published by Department for Transport, 16 July 2009.
- (ii) Delivering a Sustainable Transport system; published by Department for Transport, November 2008.
- (iii) Low Carbon Transport: A Greener Future; published by Department for Transport, July 2009.
- (iv) Development of the Third Local Transport Plan, Cabinet 6 October 2009.
- (v) The Third Local Transport Plan; Cabinet 30 March 2010.
- (vi) Documents listed in footnotes in this report.

Sue Dobson : Extension 2277

S17 Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder implications have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan
Health and Well Being	Health and well being implications have been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan.
Sustainability	The Plan has been developed in accordance with statutory duties to promote sustainability and is being subjected to SEA and Habitats Regulations
Diversity	The Plan seeks to enable everyone to be able to travel to access employment, healthcare and other services, and particularly notes the needs of older people and people with disabilities.
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The Third Local Transport Plan will form part of the Council's Policy Framework in due course, replacing the Second Local Transport Plan.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	One Darlington: Perfectly Placed has set the wider context for the development of the Plan.
Efficiency	Development of the Plan has considered the issues of efficiency savings in light of anticipated significant reductions in funding.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

11. The Local Transport Act 2008 retained the statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce and review Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and policies and the Department for Transport (DfT) issued statutory guidance on 16 July 2009. LTPs must now include a strategy and an implementation plan and this report presents a draft transport strategy.

Key steps in developing the Local Transport Plan

12. The process that has been followed to develop the Local Transport Plan as recommended by Eddington² is as follows:
 - (a) Agree the scope of the Plan
 - (b) Clarify goals
 - (c) Specify the problems or challenges the authority wants to solve
 - (d) Generate options to resolve these challenges
 - (e) Appraise the options and predict their effects
 - (f) Select preferred options and decide priorities
 - (g) Deliver the agreed strategy (Implementation Plan)
13. The first three phases have been consulted on and presented to Cabinet in March 2010. The final stage of consultation in November 2010 will seek to test the transport strategy and call for comments on the options, before a technical appraisal is completed to finalise the Implementation Plan.
14. Since the initial phases of development of the Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) which started in 2009, the national context for the development of the Plan has changed significantly. The election in May saw a change of Government and therefore the previous national transport strategy³ has been put to one side. The Transport Minister has highlighted that the key overarching policies are to grow the economy and tackle carbon emissions, whilst not neglecting other important priorities such as road safety, affordability, accessibility and people's health and wellbeing. There is an emerging theme around sustainability – that transport solutions should not just be sustainable in terms of their environmental benefits in reducing carbon emissions, but should also be fiscally and economically sustainable (affordable to the taxpayer and compatible with the economic growth agenda).
15. The Comprehensive Spending Review in October will give a clearer indication of national priorities and where funding will be allocated. It is likely to be investment in High Speed Rail, technology to reduce the carbon emissions from vehicle traffic (passengers and freight), light rail and tram schemes to link into city centre, high quality bus priority schemes, cycling initiatives, smart card technology and 'non travel' (reducing the need to travel through using broadband and other technologies)⁴.

² Eddington Transport Study, December 2006

³ Delivering a Sustainable Transport Strategy, DfT, November 2008

⁴ Speech by the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, Secretary of State for Transport, 10th September 2010.

16. The Decentralisation and Localism Bill⁵ also proposes an increasing devolution of decision making to local people. Further detail is awaited.
17. There has been widespread media coverage of the proposed cuts in funding and GONE have revised their advice from a potential 20% cut to 40% cut in Local Transport Plan funding. Although the top line figures will be announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review in October, individual LTP funding allocations will not be provided to individual highway authorities until early December. This will be compounded by reductions in the CLG Formula Grant awarded to local authorities, which includes an element for Highway Maintenance.
18. DfT has consulted on proposed data refreshes to the formulas for both highway maintenance and Integrated Transport Block, and if these proposals are approved Darlington's funding will be reduced by 7% for IT Block and increased by 1% for Maintenance. However if they decide to remove the condition data from the highway maintenance formula, Darlington's allocation will be reduced by 5%. These changes will have an immediate impact. It is not known what will happen to funding over the period of the Plan until 2026. Other sources of funding should become available as the economy recovers and housing and commercial development takes place.
19. The development of the Tees Valley Strategy Transport strategy, which provides the sub regional context for Darlington's LTP, has also been subject to delays due to these uncertainties. TVU appointed JMP Transport consultants to undertake a study on Connectivity and Accessibility to develop options on how to take forward the DaSTS agenda. With the change in Government the project was halted and no further central funding was provided. TVU has provided further funding but the first draft of the Transport Strategy was only completed on 24th September. This will be presented to the Transport Advisory Panel (replaces the Tees Valley Transport Board) in November 2010. Currently, it has been presented in Chapter 2 of the 3LTP in **Annex 1**. In the final version of the Plan the full strategy will be included in an Annex and a summary including the relevance to Darlington will be included in Chapter 2 of the 3LTP.
20. Decisions taken on the Tees Valley Bus Network Improvement project will not prejudice the development of the Implementation Plan as Cabinet will take a further view in February on both the Third Local Transport Plan and the TVBNI delivery programme (Years 2 – 5).
21. Cabinet has already agreed that Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan should cover the period from 2011 – 2026, in line with the Local Development Framework. The transport strategy has a long term time horizon and the outcomes will be achieved through the delivery of the Implementation Plan, which will be a rolling programme of schemes and interventions. The results of the consultation will be fed into the development of the Implementation Plan, although this cannot be developed in full until funding is known in December 2010. This will now be presented to Cabinet in February 2011, although some initial work has been done on the generic impacts of potential reductions in funding.
22. Although there has been a great deal of uncertainty at a national level, Darlington's Plan has been developed with extensive consultation to ensure that it identifies appropriate goals, challenges and options. Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee also considered the

⁵ Decentralisation and Localism Bill, Queens Speech, 25th May 2010.

draft Plan in June 2010. Transport has been considered within the context of both the Local Development Framework and One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.

23. The following goals for the Plan were supported by cabinet in March 2010:
- (a) Everybody is able to enjoy the Borough's prosperity by providing and maintaining a reliable, predictable, efficient and affordable transport network;
 - (b) Everyone can play their part in reducing the impact of transport on the environment and its contribution to climate change;
 - (c) People live long, healthy and active lives, travelling safely and making active travel choices;
 - (d) Everyone in Darlington can maximise their life chances by being able to access services, activities and facilities; and
 - (e) People in Darlington enjoy a positive journey experience on an attractive, clean, green and sustainable transport system
24. The next stage was to identify challenges that Darlington faces. These were generated from evidence, consultation, the Connections Study⁶ and the Connectivity and Accessibility Study⁷. The main challenges can be summarised as follows:
- (a) Support economic growth in Darlington without creating adverse traffic conditions
 - (b) Improve access to employment opportunities in neighbouring areas, in particular for those without access to a private car.
 - (c) Reduce CO2 emissions from travel in Darlington
 - (d) Reduce health inequalities in Darlington and integrate transport into the public health agenda
 - (e) Meet the needs of an increasing and aging population, with a wide range of travel requirements
 - (f) Target funding at schemes and initiatives that are low cost, deliver value for money and/or deliver the greatest outcomes at a local level
 - (g) Provide a high quality journey experience for everyone
25. In order to develop the Implementation Plan a number of strategic questions have been raised, which will help to appraise the options and determine Darlington's approach to address the challenges and achieve the goals. These Strategic Choices have resulted in a number of policy ideas as follows:
- (a) In order to support the economy and the development of land for housing and business, with acceptable levels of traffic, we will implement a combination of traffic management and sustainable travel options to ensure that the developments are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.
 - (b) The Tees Valley transport strategy recognises that without intervention, the A66 around Darlington will suffer from greater levels of congestion and therefore Darlington will support the Highways Agency in its bid for funds to address these issues.

⁶ Darlington Connections Study Issues and Opportunities, Urban Initiatives, August 2009; The Strategy and Proposals, Urban Initiatives, October 2009

⁷ Tees Valley City Region: Connectivity and Accessibility Study, Phase 1 Report, JMP and Genecon, May 2010.

- (c) To tackle congestion, implement greater management of the highway network and actively provide and promote sustainable travel options, in particular bus priority measures.
 - (d) To support local people into training and employment opportunities through sustainable travel options within Darlington and by rail, bus and car sharing for longer trips. Also to attract inward investment into Darlington as a place, through its good transport connections, gateway role and sustainable development sites.
 - (e) To reduce carbon emission from transport, provide or promote the lowest carbon options for all journeys, depending on trip purpose, destination or individual circumstance.
 - (f) To improve the journey experience, implement small scale, low cost initiatives such as training, information and enforcement and implement highly visible physical improvements as funding becomes available.
 - (g) To meet the needs of older and disabled people the Council will work in partnership with the private and voluntary and community sectors to adapt the existing transport network to meet more of the needs of older people and people with disabilities, limiting the need for specialist transport.
 - (h) The funding from DfT should be prioritised to maintain the highway network at a reasonable condition level and to manage it effectively.
 - (i) To develop and implement a model similar to that used in schools to increase levels of 'active travel', particularly in deprived wards, in a joint approach with Public Health.
26. The final stage of the process is to appraise the potential options and develop an Implementation Plan, subject to the funding that is available and the results of the consultation. The options are detailed on page 49 of **Annex 1** and the consultation will evaluate whether there are any gaps, whether any of the options should be reviewed or withdrawn. A multi criteria appraisal matrix has been developed using best practice. This incorporates the contribution of options to national goals, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed themes, LTP goals, challenges to be addressed, deliverability, affordability, value for money, analysis of carbon emissions and risks. This requires further work and will be presented as part of the Implementation Plan in February 2011.
27. The draft Plan can be found in **Annex 1**.
28. Impact assessments will be completed in order to meet our statutory duties and will assess the goals, strategic choices and options. The results will be presented in the final Plan in February 2011.

Outcome of Consultation

29. A series of consultation events were held over the Spring and Summer to develop the goals, challenges and potential options. These were presented to Economy and Environment Scrutiny in June 2010 and discussed with the general public in July at a series of 4 Talking Together events.

30. This consultation has resulted in amendments to the goals, the identification of new challenges and further ideas for possible options. As the issue of reduced funding became apparent, part of the consultation in July included gathering peoples' views as to how funding should be allocated between maintaining, managing and improving the transport network.
31. A summary of the consultation is included in the LTP in **Annex 2**.
32. The final stage will include a further period of consultation until 6th December 2010 with local people using an on-line forum in order to meet the deadlines for reports to Cabinet and Council.
33. Copies of the draft Plan will also be sent to statutory consultees including the Highways Agency, rail operators, bus companies as well as other interested stakeholders such as groups representing disabled people, cyclists, taxis, freight, coaches, older people, young people and so on.
34. Work on the required impact assessments has started, but will continue once this Plan has been approved for further consultation.