

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2000

STATEMENT BY NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1. Introduction

- 1.1 North West Leicestershire District Council will continue to participate in the Local Transport Plan process with particular emphasis on the development of the area strategies. This submission outlines key issues of local concern and importance as well as the actions taken or proposed in support of the policies included in the LTP.
- 1.2 The Council supports the principle of an integrated transport policy which seeks to minimise the environmental impact of transport whilst providing suitable options and choices. The Council has recently revised its political and management structures to enable a co-ordinated approach to all transport related issues.
- 1.3 As part of the consultation process for the Provisional LTP the District Council hosted a series of 3 seminars in its area. These were well supported and provided valuable information and feedback on local issues and views.
- 1.4 Over the past year the Council has and will continue to undertake a variety of works in conjunction with and in support of LTP policies. These works are outlined in the following paragraphs.

2. Integration

2.1 Land Use Planning/Development Control

- 2.1.1 The Council believes that planning policy will play a key role in ensuring the future sustainability of transport and related issues. The Deposited North West Leicestershire Local Plan seeks to allocate land for development in sustainable locations with the objective of providing for a pattern of development which reduces the need to travel. The plan seeks to maximise the re-use of brownfield sites and to minimise the unsustainable spread of development into surrounding countryside. Modifications to the Local Plan have now been placed on deposit.
- 2.1.2 Policies are included in the Deposited Plan to accommodate effective public transport, cycling and pedestrian access and to encourage higher density development in appropriate locations. Policies also safeguard historic and proposed transport routes and sites for proposed railway stations.

- 2.1.3 Standards for car parking provision in respect of new development are now included following Government guidance and clearly indicate that parking standards are maxima and not minima.
- 2.1.4 The Council will seek to enter into Section 106 Agreements to secure the provision where appropriate for public transport, pedestrian and cycle access, and the introduction of Green Travel Plans. Agreements already secured include the preparation of a Green Travel Plan for the Pegasus Business Park, Castle Donington, a contribution towards a station on the Ivanhoe Line at Moira and the provision of a cycleway by the developers of the former rugby club site in Coalville. A development brief for Grange Road is under consideration with a sustainable pattern of development a key priority.
- 2.1.5 The Council will seek to input into Regional Planning Guidance and Structure Plan review with implications for transport in District being given due consideration.

2.2 **Crime and Disorder**

- 2.2.1 The approved Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy for North West Leicestershire states “wherever possible to participate in and contribute to the objectives for road safety contained in the Local Transport Plan”.
- 2.2.2 The District Council is actively pursuing the provision of town centre CCTV in conjunction with the Partnership in Safer Communities Forum. This will include bids to the Home Office for the extension of the system in Ashby and new system for Coalville. These schemes if implemented will assist in deterring vehicle crime and will improve safety for pedestrians and users of public transport.
- 2.2.3 The Council supports the Safer Car Parks initiative and will, subject to available resources, undertake improvements to improve its public car parks in the light of the Best Value review of car parking to be undertaken in 2000/2001.

2.3 **Air Quality Management**

- 2.3.1 The District Council policy supports the requirements of the Environment Act 1995 and seeks to achieve the standards and objectives set out in the National Air Quality Strategy. The Council will support measures in the LTP which seek to reduce pollution from vehicles and improve air quality.
- 2.3.2 The Stage 3 Review and Assessment of Air Quality is expected to be completed by June 2000. As part of the review additional monitoring is being undertaken of various locations throughout the District. Early indications are that Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) will be designated for the Kegworth/Castle Donington area and for Coalville town centre.
- 2.3.3 Current poor air quality in Ashby town centre is expected to improve with the construction of the Ashby (A511) by-pass. It is unlikely therefore that an AQMA will be proposed for Ashby.

2.3.4 **Health**

2.3.5 The District Council is actively promoting transport related issues with the specific aim of improving health. This includes the introduction of a Local Walking Programme aimed at social enjoyment and improved fitness but with the added benefit of reducing dependency on car travel.

2.3.6 The Council fully supports the 'Safer Routes to School' initiative and is currently promoting projects at a number of local schools. Improved health is one of a number of benefits which are referred to elsewhere.

2.4 **Economic Development**

2.4.1 The District Council will continue to take a pro-active role in the regeneration of the area. Proposals are currently being developed for the regeneration of Ashby which will be the subject of further discussions with the County Council to ensure co-ordination with proposals for the town centre following the construction of the A511 Ashby by-pass.

2.4.2 A local area regeneration strategy is being developed by the Regeneration Division. Initial proposals for an SRB6 regeneration programme focussing on Ashby, Coalville and Swadlincote have been approved by EMDA to go forward for a final bid submission. Further work is being looked at to make a bid to the Coalfields Regeneration Trust for resources to undertake regeneration activity in these urban area.

2.4.3 A study recently commissioned by the District Council to look at the strategic development of the Castle Donington area has recommended a number of action points relevant to the LTP.

3. **Public Transport**

3.1 **Bus Travel and Community Transport Improvements**

3.1.1 The Council supports the provision of improved bus services throughout the District and in particular in rural areas. The Council's Community Development policies will seek to address and improve community transport with improved co-ordination between providers.

3.1.2 A key issue in the Coalville town centre improvements has been the provision of adequate bus facilities with provision being made for improved passenger information. The District Council have suggested a Bus Quality Partnership for the area which is supported in principle by the County Council and would wish to see this pursued.

3.1.3 Whilst the Council supports the improvement in public transport it does not wish to see this at the expense of rail services and in particular the Ivanhoe Line (Stage 2)

3.2 **Passenger Rail Development**

3.2.1 **The District Council is committed to doing all it possibly can to bring about the reintroduction of a passenger rail service between Leicester and Burton on Trent. The re-opening of the Ivanhoe Line (Stage 2) is considered essential for the environmental, social and economic wellbeing of the District. The line would bring overwhelming benefits to the area with considerable improvements to the quality of life of local communities. The Council feels that it is necessary to look at these benefits and not just the costs.**

4. Other Modes

4.1 Walking and Cycling

- 4.1.1 The District Council is promoting a Local Walking Programme which will provide a healthy alternative to the car. Recent improvements to Coalville town centre have paid particular attention to pedestrian facilities with improved crossing locations and a pedestrianised area at Memorial Square with improved seating, litter bins and other street furniture.
- 4.1.2 The Council is continuing to undertake the provision of cycling facilities in accordance with the District Cycling Strategy approved in 1996. Approximately 1.5 km of cycleway has been completed in the Coalville area within the past financial year. Provision is included in planning approvals for cycle facilities wherever possible.
- 4.1.3 Proposals are nearing completion for proposed cycle network in the Ibstock area. Draft proposals are being prepared for the Ashby area cycle network. Work will commence on the cycleways in the Castle Donington/Kegworth area in Summer 2000.
- 4.1.4 The Council has produced leaflets promoting Family Cycling Routes for both off-road routes and quiet routes. Financial resources have been allocated to assist towards feasibility studies on the development of cycle networks around the District.
- 4.1.5 The Heart of the National Forest Visitor Centre opened in May 1999 and was designed to provide access for all and provides the hub for a local cycle network with cycle hire available on site. The reclamation of the former Rawdon Colliery site includes the provision of a cycleway which links into the Heart of the National Forest Visitor Centre and the wider cycle network.

4.2 Waterways

- 4.2.1 A further extension of the Ashby canal is supported to provide a "water" link between major attractions in the area (i.e. Heart of the National Forest Visitor Centre, Moira Furnace, and the National Forest Discovery Centre).

5. Safety

5.1 Road Casualty Reduction/Speed Reduction

- 5.1.1 The District Council will continue to seek local safety and traffic management schemes in its area in order to effect a reduction in casualties. In particular traffic calming schemes have been implemented or are proposed.
- 5.1.2 The traffic management scheme for Ashby Road, Coalville produced a fall of around 30% in the 85 percentile speed as well as a significant reduction in the volume of large goods vehicles using the road.

5.2 Road Safety Education

- 5.2.1 Road safety education has been included in the Council's Junior Citizen Scheme and run jointly along with the County Council's road safety team. The scheme is attended by approximately 650 children over a 2 week period.

6. Travel Management

6.1 Travel Plans and Awareness

6.1.1 The District Council supports proposals to encourage Green Travel Plans for local employers. It is actively working in partnership with the County Council to promote the issue. A number of measures are being considered by the District Council for its own employees and a survey has been conducted to assess the present transport modes and patterns with a view to formulating its own strategy. Preparation and implementation of any proposals have been delayed due to staff shortages.

6.2 Parking Management

6.2.1 The Council provides public car parking in Coalville and Ashby and a number of smaller villages. The car parking policy was last reviewed in March 1997 at which time it was determined that car parking would remain free of charge and without time limits.

6.2.2 The Council accepts that management of its car parking stock is an essential element in reducing dependency on the motor car. The Council has therefore agreed to a "Best Value" review of car parking to be undertaken during 2000/2001.

6.2.3 In undertaking the review the Council would wish to ensure that any proposals are not detrimental in any way to the vitality and viability of its town/village centres. Measures therefore are likely to be aimed at deterring long stay, commuter parking whilst promoting a range of choices including walking, cycling and public transport as well as car parking provision to encourage the public to continue to support its towns and villages. Cycle parking in car parks will also be considered to compliment provision at other town centre locations.

6.2.4 As part of the review consideration will be given to the crime and disorder issues raised elsewhere in this submission. The Council will, therefore, in its proposals seek to provide safer car parks to protect both people and property subject to the availability of resources.

7. Network Management

7.1 Highway Network Improvements

7.1.1 The District Council supports any policies designed to improve management of the existing highway network and in particular to improve road safety.

7.1.2 The District Council wishes to see measures to reduce congestion and pollutions in its town centres in order to improve the quality of life for residents and shoppers. Approval for the Ashby (A511) by-pass will provide an opportunity for environmental improvements in Ashby town centre. The District Council is currently preparing proposals for the regeneration of Ashby and will work closely with the County Council.

7.1.3 As Agents to Leicestershire for the Coalville urban area, the District Council seeks to identify and promote traffic management and local safety schemes which reduce road casualties and improve facilities for more vulnerable road users i.e. pedestrians and cyclists. Schemes have recently been completed at Stamford Drive (traffic calming), Forest Road (zebra crossing), Marlborough Square (traffic management), Memorial Square (traffic management), High Street/Bridge Road/Cropston Drive/ Thornborough Road (pedestrian facilities) and are proposed in 2000/2001 at Stephenson Way and Whitwick Road (toucan crossings), Loughborough Road/The Green (traffic calming), and Bridge Road (zebra crossing).