

# Executive

## Local Transport Plan

6 December 2010

### Report of Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present information to the Executive with a view to the council making a formal response to the public consultation on the Draft Local Transport Plan.

This report is public
-----------------------

#### Recommendations

---

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) That the County Council be commended on the general format of the LTP which addresses concerns raised by this Council previously that the LTP should be organised in a way which focuses on proposals for particular settlements and creates a stronger spatial link with Local Development Frameworks,
- (2) That in general, subject to the detailed recommendations made in the report, the policies and area strategies in the LTP be supported.
- (3) That the various detailed recommendations set out in paragraphs 1.16, 1.27, 1.43, 1.52 and 1.58 are submitted as the Council's formal response to the Local Transport Plan, and in particular the Council's comments on:-
  - approach taken by the LTP towards the HS2 proposals in policy PT6
  - the references to major new road links (the South East and South West Relief Roads) in Banbury
  - the ways in which the vision for eco-Bicester can best be supported through the LTP
  - the proposed Water Eaton Parkway station, and how (a) this can best be implemented in a manner that makes it accessible to local communities in Kidlington and Gosford, and (b) future congestion concerns can best be mitigated.

#### Executive Summary

---

## Introduction

- 1.1 Oxfordshire County Council is currently preparing its third Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Oxfordshire. The LTP sets out a vision, objectives and outcomes for transport in the whole of the county. It also includes a programme of investment in new transport schemes and maintenance of the existing network.
- 1.2 This LTP covers the period 2011 – 2030. It has been prepared over many months by the County Council and has already involved a number of stages of public consultation. The most recent of these was a consultation on “scenarios” which was carried out in the early summer of 2010 and on which this Executive made comments in June (see paras. 2.2 – 2.3 below for more details).
- 1.3 The Draft Local Transport Plan was published by the County Council in October and is available for public consultation until 9<sup>th</sup> January 2011. A copy of the document has been made available in the Members’ Library.

## Proposals & Comments

- 1.4 The next section of the report looks at each of the major areas of the LTP in turn and makes comments and recommendations on each.

## General structure and policies within the Draft LTP

- 1.5 The Draft LTP is made up of four elements:-
  - An Executive Summary
  - The Draft Local Transport Plan
  - A Policy Document (which considers the rationale behind the LTP in more detail)
  - An Implementation Plan (which focuses on each of the area strategies).
- 1.6 In setting out its proposals, the Draft LTP makes it clear from the outset that there is likely to be very limited funding available for transport improvements in the first few years of the plan. The longer timescale given to the plan (up to 2030) allows the County Council to set out its aspiration whilst recognising the current economic situation.
- 1.7 The Draft LTP itself has been structured as follows:-
  - Firstly, there are a series of **general policies** for the county. One of these (policy G4) refers to County Council priorities for seeking external funding. Two projects are mentioned, Access to Oxford and transport improvements within Science Vale UK.
  - Secondly, there are a series of policies for each of the **objectives** of the LTP. These objectives are:-
    - Objective 1: to improve the condition of local roads, footways and

cycleways, including resilience to climate change

- Objective 2: to reduce congestion
  - Objective 3: to reduce casualties and the dangers associated with travel
  - Objective 4: to improve accessibility to work, education and services
  - Objective 5: to secure infrastructure and services to support development
  - Objective 6: to reduce carbon emissions from transport
  - Objective 7: to improve air quality, reduce other environmental impacts and enhance the street environment
  - Objective 8: to develop and increase the use of high quality, welcoming public transport
  - Objective 9: to develop and increase cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health.
- Thirdly, the LTP contains **area strategies** for Oxford, Abingdon, **Banbury**, **Bicester**, Science Vale UK, Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Faringdon, **Kidlington**, Henley-on-Thames, Thame, Wallingford and the **rural areas**. For each area, the challenges and then the strategy are considered.

#### General structure and policies within the Draft LTP: Comments

- 1.8 As a general comment, the County Council can be commended for the approach it has taken to the structure of the LTP document. In making its comments on the “scenarios” consultation in July 2010, this Council specifically requested that the final LTP document “*should be organised district-by-district and by settlement to create a stronger spatial link with Local Development Frameworks*” (see para. 2.3 below). The approach that the County Council has taken in presenting the draft LTP broadly does this with specific area strategies for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. There is also a county-wide rural strategy. Whilst this is thinner on specific proposals for different parts of rural area, it does recognise some of the specific issues relating to different rural areas of the county (particularly with its corridor strategies). More details comments on the strategy for the rural areas can be found in paras. 1.53 – 1.58 below.
- 1.9 Turning to the general (non area specific) policies in the LTP, the following comments can be made.
- 1.10 As noted in para. 1.7 above, policy G4 refers to priorities for external funding that the County Council will pursue. There is no mention here of eco-Bicester. Whilst Bicester is given its own strategy later in the document (see paras. 1.26 to 1.44 below), it would appear sensible to identify eco-Bicester as a potential further project which could benefit from external funding where this is available. Both the County Council and Cherwell District Council have invested considerable resources in supporting eco-Bicester, and both Councils will wish to pursue appropriate external future funding where this is

available.

1.11 Within Cherwell's Draft Core Strategy our own vision statement (which mirrors much within the Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy) aims, amongst other things, to:-

- protect our natural resources and reduce the impact of development on the natural environment
- foster a growing economy with good transport links
- reduce dependence on the private car by improving road, rail and public transport links and increasing access to services for those that need them. There will be a focus on measures aimed to manage road congestion, improving public transport, and improving access to town centres and other shops and services.

1.12 In this context, the objectives in the LTP, and the policies that derive from these, appear to be in accordance with our priorities. In particular, the following comments can be made:-

- The objective to "improve the condition of local roads, footways and cycleways, including resilience to climate change" includes a policy to encourage sustainable drainage systems in roads and other transport assets. This reflects our own commitment to support sustainable urban drainage in the Draft Core Strategy
- The objective to reduce congestion includes a policy to identify suitable and unsuitable roads for freight movement, balancing the needs of business with protecting the local environment. This reflects issues which the Council has previously raised in relation to Banbury. The matter is not, however, addressed later in the Banbury area strategy, and this is considered further below.
- The objective to secure infrastructure and services to support development includes a commitment ensuring that the location and layout of new development minimises the need to travel and can be served by high quality public transport, walking and cycling. These measures accord with the general approach taken in the Draft Core Strategy. The commitment to reduce carbon emissions is also welcomed, particularly in the context of a district such as Cherwell which is likely to see significant further growth over the lifetime of the LTP.
- The objective to develop and increase the use of high quality, welcoming public transport includes policies to support proposals to (a) strategically enhance the rail network (policy PT4) and (b) work with partners to deliver new and improved stations and greater integration of rail and buses (PT5). These can be strongly supported as they accord with the support the council has given to the Chiltern Railways Evergreen 3 proposals.
- The objective to "develop and increase cycling and walking for local journeys, recreation and health" includes a policy to improve the local network for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. This helps to meet some of our strategic objectives as set out in the Draft Core Strategy.

1.13 Under the objective of developing and increasing the use of public transport (objective 8), policy PT6 states that the County Council "*will only support the High Speed 2 rail proposals if the local economic benefits outweigh the*

*environmental impacts*". As members will be aware, the Council, at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October considered a motion in respect of the High Speed 2 proposal and it took the position that it believes that there is an insufficient Business Case for this proposal has been made. It accordingly instructed officers to prepare a report to the Executive setting out how the Council will campaign with like minded neighbouring Councils to "Stop HS2".

- 1.14 In light of this motion, the Council could use this opportunity to support the position taken by the County Council in the LTP and furthermore re-state its position that it considers that the Business case for the HS2 proposal has not yet been demonstrated.
- 1.15 As a final general comment, it will be the case that in all of the area strategies, the LTP does not distinguish always between schemes that can be realistically taken forward (i.e. which can be actively bid for or funded through the County Council and/or with other identified funding) from any other potential scheme. In these situations, the County Council will need to ensure that it can make available its technical expertise as required to support the district(s) in making those technical decisions at the LDF level. This will include, in appropriate cases, the use of its specialist consultants.

#### General structure and policies within the Draft LTP: Recommendations

- 1.16 It is recommended that:-
- The Council commends the County Council on the general format of the LTP which addresses concerns raised by this Council previously that the LTP should be organised in a way which focuses on proposals for particular settlements and creates a stronger spatial link with Local Development Frameworks.
  - The Council supports the general policies of the LTP however would wish to see eco-Bicester identified as a priority project for seeking external funding within policy G4.
  - The Council supports the objectives of the LTP and, in general, the policies within these objectives.
  - the Council supports the approach taken by the LTP towards the HS2 proposals in policy PT6, particularly in the light of the potential impact upon communities within Cherwell District of the current proposal. The Council believes, however, that the Government has not made a sufficient Business Case for the proposal.
  - The County Council is asked to guarantee that where there is no certainty of the prioritisation or funding of schemes identified in the LTP, it commits to supporting the Council where more detailed local work is needed. This may include through the use of its own consultants.

## **Area Policies**

### **Banbury**

### Banbury: Proposals

- 1.17 The main challenges for Banbury are as follows:-
- Heavy congestion on key routes into the town centre, particularly for north-south movements
  - Air quality – particularly along Hennef Way and along Oxford Road, South Bar, Horse Fair, Warwick Road and Bloxham Road
  - Difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists
  - Bus provision, particularly to some of the employment areas
  - Pedestrian links to Banbury station
- 1.18 The strategy for Banbury focuses on walking, cycling, bus movements and reducing congestion. It includes the following:-
- Highway improvements - will focus on improving junction design where this may improve capacity and reduce congestion. New roads will be considered where alternatives have been considered and discounted. Two major road schemes for Banbury are noted: a South East Relief Road (Bloxham Road to Hennef Way) and a South West Relief Road (Stratford Road to Bloxham Road). The LTP makes it clear, however, that these schemes are unlikely to attract central government funding and will only be delivered in association with development of such a scale as would be able to wholly or mostly fund the road.
  - Buses – new information systems, new bus routes including between residential and employment areas
  - Rail – improvements to the station forecourt; improved walking routes to the station
  - Walking and cycling – improvements to the walking and cycling network, including within the town centre and between residential and employment areas.
  - Behavioural change – working with employers to produce and implement travel plans; promote car clubs and car sharing.

### Banbury: Comment

- 1.19 Within the Draft Core Strategy, the need to manage traffic congestion and to provide for more opportunities to travel in a more sustainable way, are highlighted as key issues for Banbury. The spatial strategy for Banbury (within the Draft Core Strategy) seeks to improve public transport services and opportunities for walking and cycling and to minimise traffic congestion. In this context approach in the LTP appears a sound one.
- 1.20 There is much within the Draft Core Strategy which would support the LTP strategy for Banbury, and vice versa. Many of the detailed proposals link in to areas already earmarked for development (such as at Bankside) or allocated in the Draft Core Strategy. In particular, the canalside development provides housing in a sustainable location which will limit the need for additional car movements. The scheme furthermore provides an opportunity to improve the

railway station forecourt and pedestrian and cycle links into the town centre.

- 1.21 A key concern with Banbury is traffic congestion, and the LTP strategy seeks to use a number of lower cost measures to tackle this. Congestion in the town centre (and especially due to the north/south movements through the town) is a particular challenge. The strategy for tackling this principally seeks to promote alternatives (walking, cycling and public transport) as far as possible. In the light of the restricted funds available to the LTP in the next few years, this approach is a reasonable one. It must be recognised that short of investing in major new road schemes around the town, the opportunities to address this congestion will be limited.
- 1.22 Regarding major new road schemes, the LTP is clear that there will not be the public funding to major new road schemes around Banbury and that therefore such schemes would only come forward if funded wholly, or in large part, by new development. This approach is consistent with that taken across the LTP. Whilst the lack of such public funding is regretted, it is nonetheless realistic.
- 1.23 The situation within Cherwell therefore is that the two major road schemes named for Banbury would only come forward as an integral part of major new development. Realistically, this will not happen in the lifetime of the LTP. The South East Relief Road would require large levels of development in the south of the town (beyond that already committed at Bankside) and to the south of Easington and the Salt Way to fund it. It should be remembered that the Bankside development has been planned (and given consent) without any provision for a possible South Eastern Relief Road. The alignment of such a road (which has not been identified, even in broad terms, in the LTP) would therefore presumably have to run to the south of the Bankside development and rugby club land. The South West Relief Road (which similarly has not been defined on a plan) would require large levels of development along the western side of the town including around Crouch Hill and to the west of Bretch Hill.
- 1.24 Although the Draft Core Strategy proposes some development to the west of Bretch Hill and in the Bankside area, this is not of a scale that would begin to justify or afford the provision of either of these major relief roads (estimated at £30-40m). Furthermore, the Council has consistently argued (including at the Public Examination into the South East Plan) that the environmental constraints on the town (including the flooding issues that affect parts of the town, the landscape constraints of the natural "bowl" within which the town sits, and the limited crossing points for the river, canal and railway line) mean that Banbury should not be a focus for major new development.
- 1.25 For these reasons, it is considered that it is unrealistic to maintain a reference to either of these major road schemes in the LTP. To maintain such a reference may give rise to continuing uncertainty over whether there is any future for either of these road schemes over the lifetime of the LTP. This may lead to planning uncertainty and unrealistic hopes for those wishing to see the roads built.
- 1.26 One issue that the LTP does not consider in detail is HGV movements. This was a specific matter that the District Council raised in the scenarios consultation. This matter should be considered alongside others as a means of better managing traffic through Banbury, particularly through the town

centre. There is a general reference to this within objective 2 (reducing congestion) but it is not seen in the area strategy for Banbury.

#### Banbury: Recommendations

1.27 It is recommended that:-

- The general area strategy for Banbury be supported.
- The references to major new road links (the South East and South West Relief Roads) should be deleted from the LTP as there is no prospect of them being delivered in the lifetime of the LTP and it is therefore unrealistic and misleading to retain a reference to them in the document.
- The County Council continues to work with the District council to consider the opportunities created by major development proposals in Banbury, and in particular the canalside proposals, to meet the objectives of the LTP.
- The LTP, and in particular the Implementation Plan, acknowledges the contribution made by HGV movements to overall congestion and seeks to address this as part of an overall strategy for Banbury.

### **Bicester**

#### Bicester: Proposals

1.28 The main problems and challenges for Bicester are summarised as follows:-

- Developing an eco town at North West Bicester
- Achieving eco Bicester objectives for the whole town
- Achieving a work/life balance at NW Bicester to meet containment targets
- Achieving a high level of sustainable transport from the new development
- Using the measures being implemented in NW Bicester to trigger a change in travel behaviour across the town
- Ensuring the highway network functions with the remaining car trips
- Existing weekday congestion
- Bicester Village Retail Park (B4030): The worst traffic congestion is often at weekends and Bank Holidays on the road network serving the Bicester Village Retail Park and this can create inappropriate routeing (“rat running”) particularly in Chesterton.
- M40 junction 9
- Park and Ride
- Bucknell Road/Howes Lane junction – congestion caused by traffic



accessing Upper Heyford and M40 junction 10

- Air quality – Kings End and Queens Avenue being considered as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and possibly Field Street/North Street.
- Walking and Cycling – network not complete and difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate town layout especially visitors
- Public rights of way – disjointed network particularly where paths meet the road network
- Rail and bus stations – significant use of sustainable transport to keep car travel for trips within the town to a minimum

1.29 The strategy for Bicester focuses on walking, cycling, bus movements and reducing congestion. It includes the following:-

- Behaviour change – to be promoted through the *Bicester Travel Behaviour Project*; working with employers and schools to change travel patterns
- Walking and cycling – creating and improving the town's walking and cycling network, particularly routes to key destinations and employment sites, promoting Market Square enhancements.
- Buses – delivering a rapid bus route between NW Bicester and the town centre, Premium Route standard bus stops for the town, delivering bus infrastructure and bus priority to improve reliability on A41 corridor, investigation of new electric /hybrid vehicles on key routes such as the exemplar site at NW Bicester, securing developer contributions to enhance the routing and frequencies of local bus services,
- Park and Ride – creating a park and ride facility adjacent to the A41 (subject to demand assessment). A remote Park and Ride facility is proposed at South West Bicester. The scope of the assessment is not clear from the strategy although the problems and challenges section suggests that the SW Bicester site could be a suitable for car users to transfer to the bus for journeys to Oxford with the opportunity for motorists to transfer to buses for journeys to Bicester town centre including Bicester Village.
- Low Emission Vehicles – introducing charging points for electric vehicles, working with local organisations to encourage the use of lower carbon emission vehicles and investigating options for encouraging use of lower emission private vehicles
- Rail – supporting the upgrade of Bicester Town Station; working with the East West Rail consortium, delivery of a high quality public transport and better cycle links from NW Bicester to the town's railway stations; improving cycle parking at the railway stations and introducing a bus interchange at Bicester town railway station.
- Highway infrastructure and traffic management – working with NW Bicester developers to promote integration with the existing town, incorporating *Eco Bicester* principles to promote safer, more sustainable and healthier modes of transport to and from the site, reducing the

attractiveness of Howes Lane, and Lords Lane to through traffic, improvements to the Eastern perimeter road as an attractive alternative to the central corridor, delivery of the SW perimeter road working with developers, M40 junction 9 improvements working with the Highways Agency, investigating the need to improve M40 junction 10 and its approaches, delivering the second phase of Roman Road improvements, traffic signage review on the strategic road network to ensure routeing is correct and remove clutter.

- 1.30 In summary, the key elements of the transport strategy for Bicester are: promoting travel behaviour change by looking at how to reduce the vehicle miles travelled and working with employers and schools; promoting walking and cycling by improving and creating routes and improving the public realm at key destinations, employment sites and the Market Square; developing rapid, frequent and reliable bus services; encouraging the introduction of low emission vehicles, including through the increased use of electric vehicles and provision of charging infrastructure; supporting improved rail services, the upgrade of Bicester town station and access by sustainable modes to both stations and improving highway infrastructure and traffic management including integrating new developments with the town, delivering the south west perimeter road, downgrading the attractiveness of Howes Lane and Lords Lane, improving the eastern perimeter route, and reviewing traffic signage.
- 1.31 The Executive summary identifies strategic transport schemes set out in the Oxfordshire Local Investment Plan (LIP) required to support the development of Bicester in the short term including M40 junction 9 improvements, the park and ride facility, South West Perimeter Road and sustainable transport improvements. The LTP consultation process seeks support for the above schemes as priorities in the local area whilst recognising the delivery of the scheme is unlikely in the short term due to funding constraints.
- 1.32 It is proposed that this Strategy will replace the Bicester ITLUS (2000) and ITLUS contributions will be transferred to the LTP3 Bicester Town Strategy

#### Bicester: Comments

- 1.33 Within the Draft Core Strategy, highway constraints such as the traffic congestion in the town centre, the need for improvements to M40 junction 9 and the Bucknell Road / Howes Lane junction within the town, are highlighted as key issues for Bicester. The spatial strategy for Bicester (within the Draft Core Strategy) seeks to provide for new development in accessible locations that will maximise the opportunities for providing sustainable transport choices, reducing traffic congestion and the proportion of out commuting. In this context approach in the LTP appears sound.
- 1.34 The Draft Core Strategy, recognised the traffic problems caused by Bicester's rapid growth in recent years and congestion caused by developments such as Bicester Village Retail Outlet. It refers to LTP2 and existing transport issues. The Draft LTP3 provides the opportunity to align the Core Strategy with the emerging transport strategy for Bicester and shares many of the goals and objectives.
- 1.35 There is much within the Draft Core Strategy which would support the LTP strategy for Bicester, and vice versa. Many of the detailed proposals link in to areas of committed development (such as at SW Bicester) or the proposed

eco development at NW Bicester allocated in the Draft Core Strategy. In particular, the Eco Bicester One Shared Vision for the town will form part of the transport strategy.

- 1.36 Eco development provides the opportunity to promote sustainable travel choices, behavioural change and achieve eco town standards set out in the Eco Towns Planning Policy Statement (PPS), July 2009. The NW Bicester development will be an exemplar of sustainable development and the Council would wish to ensure that the LTP reflects requirements for travel in eco towns set out in the Eco towns PPS and *Eco Bicester One Shared Vision*. The behaviour change strategy should consider using targets for trips originating within the town to be made by non-car means based on the 50 per cent target set out in the above documents. The strategy seeks to promote sustainable transport choices (walking, cycling and public transport). For example it promotes a rapid bus route between the proposed eco development at NW Bicester and the town centre. It is important that the improved bus service is extended to the town's business and employment areas as part of a fully integrated transport network.
- 1.37 A key concern with Bicester is traffic congestion, and the LTP strategy seeks to tackle this through a variety of measures including behavioural change and traffic management. Congestion in the town (and especially due to the nature of business at Bicester Village Retail Outlet) is a particular challenge. In the light of the restricted funds available to the LTP in the next few years, the opportunities to address this congestion will be limited.
- 1.38 In terms of the Park and Ride facility, this will be subject to a demand assessment to identify the need for the proposals. However it is not clear how the facility will operate and whether it will serve Oxford, Bicester town centre, Bicester Village or all of these destinations. The LTP needs to be very clear on this point as there is currently a lack of clarity on this important issue.
- 1.39 The infrastructure schemes identified in the LTP remain a priority for Cherwell District Council in delivering Eco Bicester and they should be supported. Regarding the delivery of infrastructure schemes, the LTP is clear that public funding will not be available in the short term (5 years) for major schemes in and around Bicester. The Bicester Area Strategy recognises that enhanced levels of investment will be required to deliver the transport improvements set out in the LTP and reflect Bicester's eco town status. On this basis, the delivery of the transport improvements within Bicester should be included as a priority for external funding and included in Policy G4 of the LTP.
- 1.40 Recognising the funding difficulties inherent in the development of major new infrastructure, the LTP Draft Implementation Plan for Bicester identifies a number of areas that should be further investigated in an effort to manage traffic and provide highway infrastructure. These include investigating improvements to the eastern perimeter route to provide through traffic with a viable and attractive alternative to the central corridor through the town centre. Use of new electric/hybrid buses is also put forward for further investigation. These measures should be kept under active consideration and the further work undertaken at the earliest opportunity once the scope of the further investigations and assessments has been agreed with the District Council.
- 1.41 Prior to the eco development proposed at NW Bicester, the intention was to

take traffic out of the town centre by improving Howes Lane and its junction with Bucknell Road and building the South West perimeter road to link with the A41 north of the Chesterton junction. Draft LTP3 proposes downgrading Howes Lane to enable the eco development to link with the existing town. A consequence of this is that improvements will need to be made to key junctions along the eastern perimeter road so that it provides a viable and attractive alternative for through traffic. The impact of the NW Bicester development is currently being tested by the developer's transport consultants and the results of this work will be used to inform the improvements required to the existing transport network.

- 1.42 In summary, the inclusion of the area strategy section for Bicester is broadly welcomed. The strategy provides the background to the transport issues affecting Bicester including M40 junctions 9 and 10 and existing congestion in the town with specific reference to Bicester Village and Bucknell Road/Howes Lane junction. It seeks to set out how the transport strategy for the town should respond to the eco-development at North West Bicester. As it does so, however, it is vital that issues such as the future of the Park & Ride proposal at SW Bicester and the implications of the eco-development on the functioning of the perimeter road are fully and clearly explained

#### Bicester: Recommendation

- 1.43 It is recommended that:-

- The general area strategy for Bicester be supported.
- The strategic transport schemes for Bicester remain a priority and should be supported, subject to receiving further information and clarification on the scope and detail of the schemes.
- The delivery of the transport improvements within Bicester should be included as a priority for external funding and included in Policy G4 of the LTP.
- The County Council continues to work with the District council to consider the opportunities created by the eco development proposals at NW Bicester, and in particular the transport and movement section of the Eco Bicester One Shared Vision, to meet the objectives of the LTP.
- The LTP, and in particular the Bicester Area strategy, acknowledges the eco town standards set out the Eco town PPS and Eco Bicester One Shared Vision as part of an overall strategy for Bicester.
- The walking and pedestrian environment strategy should investigate links and the integration between the proposed eco development and the existing town as a priority. Pedestrians should also be given priority in considering highway infrastructure improvements.
- The cycling strategy should refer to the railway stations as key locations/destinations providing cycling facilities.
- The strategy for buses in Bicester particularly the rapid bus route between the NW Bicester development site and town centre should include employment areas as part of a fully integrated transport network.

- The LTP be asked to clarify the purpose of the Park and Ride facility at South West Bicester and give a clear indication of when the demand assessment will be undertaken to inform any decision on the future of this proposal.
- The Transport Strategy for Bicester should be worked up in more detail to align with the emerging Cherwell Local Development Framework and Eco Bicester One Shared Vision. This would include looking further at the need and realistic opportunities to provide sustainable transport infrastructure in and around the town and deliver the required highway capacity and achieve the requirements of the eco town standards.
- The LTP should clarify the priority that needs to be given to exploring how improvements can be made junctions to the eastern perimeter road as a consequence of the measures as part of the eco-development to reduce the attractiveness of Howes Lane and Lords Lane to through traffic.
- All of the actions identified in the Implementation Plan under “Highways Infrastructure and Traffic Management” be considered further at the earliest reasonable opportunity once the scope of the investigations has been agreed with the District Council.

## **Kidlington**

### Kidlington: Proposals

- 1.44 Kidlington is generally well served by public transport. The key issues affecting Kidlington are identified as air quality (in the vicinity of the Bicester Road junction with the A34) and currently poor interchange arrangements for rail. This will improve, however, with the construction of the new parkway station at Water Eaton.
- 1.45 The strategy for Kidlington focuses on three elements:-
- Walking & cycling: including new links to Water Eaton Parkway and improved links to the business parks and airport.
  - Traffic management: including a traffic signage review of signage from the strategic road network to Kidlington
  - Public transport: including improving services to the airport, and investigating a range of improvements including a new service to Water Eaton Parkway.
  - Behavioural change: working with schools and businesses to develop travel plans

### Kidlington: Comments

- 1.46 This strategy appears to fit reasonably well with priorities already identified by the Council including through the Draft Core Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy. These identified the following priorities:-
- Ensuring sufficient access to services

- Ensuring stronger links between industrial areas, the airport and local residents and the village centre
  - Positioning Kidlington in economic terms in view of its unique place on account of the airport, Begbroke Science Park and its proximity to Oxford and promoting the sustainable commercial and recreational potential of the canal and airport.
  - Continuing to explore the potential for a new station
  - Addressing the issue of the main road bisecting the village and traffic management.
- 1.47 The Cherwell Non Statutory Local Plan allocates land for a railway station at Kidlington on the Banbury to Oxford line. This was supported in the first LTP (2001-06) but not in the second (2006-11). This LTP makes no provision for a new station, however it does identify the proposed new station at Water Eaton Parkway being developed as part of the Evergreen 3 Project by Chiltern Railways.
- 1.48 The Council has supported the principle of the Water Eaton Parkway station as part of the wider Chiltern Railways proposals. In order for this station to be successful, it is vital that good pedestrian, cycle and bus links are made to the new station. The references to this in the LTP are welcomed, and these should be prioritised to optimise the opportunities that the station will bring to the village. It would also be helpful if the LTP was able to take a clear position on the previous railway station proposal for Kidlington to avoid any future uncertainty.
- 1.49 It should be noted that the proposed Water Eaton Parkway does have the support (in principle) of Kidlington Parish Council which identifies a number of benefits that the station will bring to Kidlington in terms of lifting its economic profile and providing much improved public transport access for residents of the village.
- 1.50 Notwithstanding this support in principle, both Kidlington and Gosford & Water Eaton Parish Councils are concerned about the level of traffic associated with the station and the proposed level of car parking. These matters are currently being considered as part of the public inquiry into the Transport & Works Act application for the Evergreen 3 proposal. It will be important, however, that the LTP has regard to these matters in finalising its strategy for Kidlington in the event that the station is approved and that increased problems of traffic congestion may occur in the future.
- 1.51 The LTP makes few direct references to the impact of the A4260 which bisects the village, however it does refer (particularly in the Implementation Plan) to the need to support "*Cherwell District Council's principle that Kidlington Village Centre is the vibrant heart of the village*" and supporting "*schemes which provide excellent facilities for pedestrians, in particular wider footpaths and pedestrian crossings*" (Implementation Plan: Kidlington Area Strategy, para. 24.32).

#### Kidlington: Recommendation

- 1.52 It is recommended that:-
- The general area strategy for Kidlington be supported.

- In the event of the Parkway station at Water Eaton being approved, the County Council be asked to prioritise measures to make sure that high quality pedestrian, walking and bus links are provided from Kidlington and Gosford to the station. Furthermore, notwithstanding the mitigation measures that will be put in place arising from the current Transport & Works Act application regarding the station, the LTP should recognise the potential for increased congestion within Kidlington and Gosford. It should commit to keeping this under close review once the station is operational, and then considering further traffic management measures as a priority if these are found necessary.
- The County Council be asked to take a clear position on the future potential of a railway station in Kidlington on the Banbury to Oxford line as previously identified in the Non Statutory Local Plan and first LTP. If the provision of the Water Eaton Parkway station removes any possibility of this station being built, this should be made clear for the avoidance of future doubt.
- Priority should also be given to measures to improve pedestrian connectivity within and to Kidlington Village Centre, particularly across the A4260, along the lines noted in the Implementation Plan.

## **Rural Areas**

### Rural Areas: Proposals

- 1.53 These proposals cover the whole of rural Oxfordshire, not just that part within Cherwell District.
- 1.54 Perhaps not surprisingly, and particularly given financial constraints, the strategy for the rural areas focuses on maintaining existing services and facilities, and improving access to these.
- Buses: The aim is to improve services on major routes between towns, to retain a basic county bus service network in other areas, and to support better marketing and promotion of services. Some improvements to bus shelters will be planned as resources allow.
  - Rail: Improvements are planned to Islip station as part of Evergreen 3. The main LTP focus will be to improving access to stations.
  - Roads: There are no major highway improvements proposed in the lifetime of the Plan. There will be a roll-out of 50mph speed limits on all single carriageway roads and the County Council will support initiatives to have this adopted as a national standard.
  - Walking, cycling, behavioural change: The focus will be on improving connections between villages and to the rights of way network.
- 1.55 There are also a number of corridor strategies proposed.
- Along the A34 north of Oxford, options for a Park & Ride at Bicester will be investigated, and support given to improvements at junction 9 of the

M40 and the Evergreen 3 proposals.

- Along the A4260/A4165 corridor into Oxford, measures include improving access to Water Eaton Park & Ride, supporting the new station and improving access to this.

#### Rural Areas: Comments

1.56 This strategy appears to fit reasonably well with priorities already identified by the Council including through the Draft Core Strategy and the Sustainable Community Strategy. These identified the following priorities:-

- Protecting and maintaining access to local services wherever possible
- Supporting a sustainable rural economy
- Identifying where traffic controls are desirable and beneficial
- Improving road safety particularly from speeding vehicles and dangerous driving
- Improving links between villages for walkers and cyclists and equestrians.

1.57 Given that the strategy covers the whole of the Oxfordshire rural area, it is short on specific projects and initiatives which would directly benefit our district. The following comments can, however, be made:-

- The reference to improving bus services on major routes between towns and retaining a basic county bus service network in other areas is supported. Care will need to be particularly given to protecting services in those villages which offer employment and other opportunities, to ensure that these opportunities are best supported.
- The initiative to support road safety by reducing speed limits on single carriageway roads is supported.
- The measures to improve accessibility to the new Water Eaton Parkway station can be supported as recognition of some of the potential problems created by the new station.

#### Rural Areas: Recommendations

1.58 It is recommended that:-

- The general area strategy for the rural areas be supported.
- Within the strategy for bus travel, priority should be given to ensuring that a good level of service is particularly provided to those villages which offer employment and other opportunities
- Within the “corridor strategies”, priority should be given to ensuring that good access is provided to the proposed Water Eaton Parkway station to maximise opportunities for people to get to the station by means other than the private car.



## **Conclusion**

- 1.59 The consultation on the Local Transport Plan runs until 9<sup>th</sup> January. The County Council will then consider all of the comments received and anticipate approving a final LTP in April 2011.

## Background Information

---

- 2.1 The County Council is required to produce an LTP by April 2011 in order to meet the requirements of the Transport Act 2000 (amended by the Local Transport Act 2008). The previous two LTPs cover a 5 year period and the current LTP runs to 2011. The emerging LTP will cover a longer time period of 20 years allowing greater flexibility in its development and sets the long term strategy and transport objectives for the area. This brings it into line with the Oxfordshire Sustainable Communities Strategy ("Oxfordshire 2030") and provides some headroom beyond 2026 which is the timeframe within which LDFs are being prepared.
- 2.2 Members will recall that in the early summer, the County Council consulted on a series of "scenarios" for the LTP. These considered various alternative approaches that could be taken towards transport planning for the county over the next 20 years. The scenarios were not place-specific (except for a section of Oxford City), but instead looked at an approach for the "large towns" (which included Banbury and Bicester), the "smaller towns" (which included Kidlington) and the "rural areas" of the county. For each area, different scenarios were put forward. (For example, for the larger towns there were scenarios for "promoting lower emissions", "promoting transport choice" and "supporting economic growth".)
- 2.3 At its meeting on 7 June, Executive approved a response from Cherwell District Council to this consultation. Although it made detailed comments on the different scenarios for each of the areas, it made an overall recommendations that:-
- The scenario-based consultation is not helpful in considering the specific transport needs and issues relating to areas of Cherwell District. There should, therefore, be specific consultation on scheme choices relating to specific locations in the county."
  - "The final LTP should be organised district-by-district and by settlement to create a stronger spatial link with Local Development Frameworks."
- 2.4 The comments that have been proposed above take as a starting point these recommendations and the detailed analysis that the Council undertook at that time. They also reflect other work that the council, and its partners, have been undertaking, and other strategies that they have been preparing, which have helped inform the recommendations in the report. These include the following:-
- The Sustainable Community Strategy "Our District; Our Future"
  - The Draft Core Strategy
  - The Cherwell Rural Strategy
  - The "Eco-Bicester; One Shared Vision" document

## **Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options**

---

- 3.1 The Executive is invited to consider the contents of the report and consider its response on behalf of the District Council to this public consultation.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

- Option One** To endorse the recommendations in the report as the Council's formal response to the Draft Local Transport Plan
- Option Two** To add or amend the proposed response as the Council's formal response to the Draft Local Transport Plan
- Option Three** Not to respond to the consultation.

## **Consultations**

---

- LSP Board** The LTP Team have presented the LTP to the LSP Board as part of the public consultation.
- All district councillors** All councillors were alerted of the commencement of the public consultation. A copy of the LTP and supporting material has been placed in the Members' Room.

## **Implications**

---

- Financial:** There are no direct financial implications arising from making a response to this public consultation. There may, however, be financial implications when specific transport schemes have been identified in terms of how they will be funded through planning obligations and developer contributions.  
Comments checked by Joanne Kaye, Service Accountant 01295 221545
- Legal:** There are no legal implications from this report.  
Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Solicitor, 01295 221687
- Risk Management:** There are no risks to the Council in participating in the consultation on the emerging LTP3. Dependent upon the ultimate outcome of the LTP process, there may be risks to the Council being able to successfully bring forward its planning and other strategies if these rely on support from the LTP.  
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566

## **Wards Affected**

---

All

## Corporate Plan Themes

---

**Theme 4 Promoting a prosperous and sustainable economy**

**Theme 6 Protecting and enhancing the local environment**

**Theme 8 Rural focus**

## Executive Portfolio

---

**Councillor Michael Gibbard**

**Portfolio Holder for Planning & Housing**

## Document Information

---

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
None	
<b>Background Papers</b>	
Draft Local Transport Plan and supporting document: Oxfordshire County Council, October 2010 Report to Executive on Local Transport Plan, June 2010 (Other earlier background papers are referred to in the June 2010 Executive report.	
<b>Report Author</b>	Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Policy & Economic Development Andrew Bowe, Implementation Officer
<b>Contact Information</b>	01295 221840 <a href="mailto:philip.clarke@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk">philip.clarke@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>  01295 221842 <a href="mailto:Andrew.bowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">Andrew.bowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>