

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

NON-KEY DECISION – 18/01

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: ‘HERTFORDSHIRE’S DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN’ (LTP4) CONSULTATION, NOVEMBER 2017

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- The purpose of this report is to agree the Council’s response to Hertfordshire County Council’s Draft ‘Hertfordshire’s Local Transport Plan’ (LTP4) Consultation, November 2017.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION: that Hertfordshire County Council be informed that East Herts Council:

(A)	Generally supports the Themes, Objectives and Principles contained within the Draft ‘Hertfordshire’s Local Transport Plan’ (LTP4) Consultation, November 2017, and the intention to support and help facilitate identified growth across the county to 2050;
(B)	While fully supporting the aims of the draft LTP in respect of achieving modal shift, it is considered that the implementation of measures for individual towns will need to be fully considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the correct balance is reached between deterring increased levels of car usage and the need to support the economic vitality and viability of town centres. This is particularly true where towns support rural hinterlands, where little or no passenger transport journey alternatives to the car exist, and also where too draconian car parking regimes could result in shoppers and businesses choosing to use other towns;

(C)	<p>In order to help reduce the potential for significantly increased car journeys resulting from planned growth in the county, the LTP should contain a policy approach for major new housing development to require sustainable transport provision be made available to new residents from first occupation, so that green travel patterns are established from the outset. The County Council should also make a policy commitment towards providing financial support where funding gaps from developer contributions for such implementation arise;</p>
(D)	<p>Supports, in principle, the implementation of a Hertford Bypass in order to: accommodate growth identified in the emerging District Plan to 2033; improve air quality; reduce congestion; and, provide Hertford with the potential to become a Sustainable Travel Town. However, in the absence of any specific route being identified at this stage, the Council reserves its position in this respect;</p>
(E)	<p>Strongly objects to the statement included under the 'Hertford Bypass' section (page 106) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The scheme should enable further growth of Hertford beyond that currently included in the emerging East Hertfordshire Local Plan. This should be a consideration in the further development of the scheme given its potential to strengthen the case for the scheme and fund its delivery. As with other Sustainable Travel Towns this scheme also provides the potential for greater housing density and car free development in the town, which should also be a consideration in Local Plan development." <p>As it is the function of East Herts Council (as Planning Authority) to consider where any future development should be allocated in the District, it is therefore totally inappropriate for the County Council, which does not have such responsibilities, to include any statement in the LTP that could be perceived as pre-determining</p>

	<p>decisions around growth potential beyond 2033. Therefore, while wording around the need to ensure that growth currently identified in the emerging East Herts District Plan to 2033 can be accommodated and should be taken into account in respect of the evidence base towards the need for the provision of a bypass for Hertford, the statement currently included in the text should be deleted from any future iteration of LTP4.</p>
(F)	<p>Supports the Corridor approach, particularly in respect of Corridors 4, 5 and 8, which apply to East Herts, but considers that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that the text of Corridor 4 should be expanded to include reference to supporting the aims of the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor (LSCC); (ii) the features of Corridor 5 should be expanded so that the second bullet point makes reference to Hertford (in order that the sustainable growth planned through the District Plan features in the same way as other proposed development e.g. in Ware), and further that the Hertford Bypass should be detailed; and, (iii) that, for Corridor 8, as previously stated in the Council’s response to the 2016 Transport Vision 2050 Consultation, the LTP should make provision for a bypass for Standon/Puckeridge. This proposal, which has long been supported by the Council as a continuation of the Little Hadham bypass scheme, is considered vital to ensure that the A120 has long-term resilience to cope with the impacts of a significant rise in traffic along this route caused by development proposals both in the county and wider locations, coupled with the likely effects of Stansted Airport’s aspirations for passenger levels to increase to up to 43 mppa;
(G)	<p>Welcomes the inclusion of Bishop’s Stortford, Hertford and Ware under ‘Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Town initiatives’, and requests that Buntingford and</p>

	Sawbridgeworth should also be considered for inclusion in this approach;
(H)	Under 'Transport Improvements to support new development' (p102), questions whether the delivery of a new link road between Widbury Hill and the A10, with necessary related junction improvements, as part of the development to the North and East of Ware should be included within the list of schemes;
(I)	Welcomes the inclusion of Bishop's Stortford and Hertford under 'Sustainable Travel Towns' scheme initiatives;
(J)	Supports the introduction of an 'A414 Bus Rapid Transit' scheme, but considers that this should be reworded to add more certainty around the future extensions to Hertford and Harlow, which should reference dependency on the delivery of the Hertford Bypass instead of 'potential'. Although slightly distant from the A414, consideration should also be given to the inclusion of Stansted Airport as an extension to the end point of this route, due to the significant transport hub and employment opportunities it offers;
(K)	In respect of 'New Rail Stations to Investigate', generally supports the inclusion of additional rail stations at both Turnford and Park Plaza, provided that the introduction of these would not negatively affect the provision of West Anglia services to stations in East Herts, particularly in relation to frequency of service on the Hertford East branch line;
(L)	Objects to the draft LTP in respect of how, despite identifying shortfalls in bus provision and risk of social exclusion in rural areas, it largely ignores the needs of rural communities and is currently deficient in respect of inclusion of measures that would enable sustainable journey choices to be made. It is unacceptable that over a third of the county will have no targeted schemes to reduce trip generation (which impacts on urban settlements) through sustainable journey improvements. The Council therefore requires that an

	additional section be added to the LTP detailing a strategy for rural communities. This should include support for innovative solutions, e.g. demand responsive services; community transport initiatives; and, the potential to introduce ‘mini park and ride’ schemes to provide access to, and increase patronage of, bus services around hub and spoke principles, etc;
(M)	Considers that the text of the third paragraph on page 71 should be updated in respect of Stansted Airport to reflect MAG’s stated aspirations to expand to around 43 million passengers per annum, with a planning application expected shortly, and also to refer to the recent permission granted for a new arrivals building;
(N)	Brings to the County Council’s attention that, on page 47, there is a cross-referencing error in the sixth paragraph “[see page 41]”, where that page does not contain the strategic spatial options discussed.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is currently carrying out a public consultation on its draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4), which will become the long term transport strategy for Hertfordshire to 2050.
- 1.2 The consultation document is available to view via the link at the Background Papers section of this report. In terms of consideration of the issues raised, this report, while discussing some wider matters, concentrates largely on those aspects that could have the most potential impact on East Herts residents.
- 1.3 The consultation closes on 23rd January 2018.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Members will recall that, in autumn 2016, HCC consulted on its ‘Hertfordshire 2050 Transport Vision’ as a pre-cursor to the

formulation of a draft LTP4, which will replace the current Local Transport Plan (LTP3), adopted in 2011. This consultation related to a high-level document, which concentrated on a Vision. This did not contain full details of proposed transport measures for the future but, rather, set the scene in terms of headlining the potential strategies an emerging LTP4 could contain. The Council made a response to that consultation and this set out several key areas which it wished to see addressed in the next iteration of the LTP. The Executive report from December 2016 is available to view via the link at the Background Papers section of this report.

- 2.2 Officers of HCC attended a briefing and made a presentation to Members on 5th December. At this time it was stated that, although there is an online questionnaire available, it would be expected that an extended response would be appropriate for local authorities. Therefore, the proposed response to HCC, as detailed in the Recommendations above, does not seek to answer standard questions but, rather, raises matters most pertinent to this District.

Overview

- 2.3 The draft Local Transport Plan, which comprises a 115 page document, is intended to provide a framework and long term vision to guide all future transport planning activity for the next 30 years. It identifies major transport schemes required to support growth over that period and sets out policies to help guide such provision along with transport and land use decisions.
- 2.4 The following diagram (Figure 1.2) sets out the inter-relationships between the Themes, Objectives and Principles, which support the strategy.

Themes, Objectives and Principles



Figure 1.2: Themes, Objectives and Principles of the LTP

2.5 Following on from this, a series of policies have been developed to facilitate implementation of the objectives and these are further supplemented by a list of major schemes and initiatives, many of which are largely intended to support eight identified multimodal movement corridors in the county. Of these corridors, three are of direct relevance to East Herts:

- Corridor 4: London – Harlow – Stansted – Cambridge (p97);
- Corridor 5: Hemel & Watford – St Albans – Harlow (p98); and
- Corridor 8: Stevenage – Stansted (p100).

2.6 The initiatives contained within the draft LTP generally recognise that the planned growth in the county will generate additional movements that cannot be sustained solely through providing new-road based mitigations to meet increased demand. The main supported approach is therefore aimed at

achieving modal shift and policies towards sustainable transport initiatives are at the fore.

- 2.7 Particular initiatives to be supported in this respect include: the Corridor approach; Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Town Initiatives (which would be applicable to Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Ware); Sustainable Travel Towns (applicable to Bishop's Stortford and Hertford); and the A414 Bus Rapid Transit scheme.
- 2.8 With regard to the corridor approach, however, there are a few areas which are currently omitted that it is considered should also be included. These involve:
- (i) In Corridor 4, including referencing of the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor (LSCC);
 - (ii) For Corridor 5, where it describes 'features of our strategic approach', for this paragraph to include Hertford in the second bullet point in order that the sustainable growth planned through the District Plan for this settlement features in the same way as other proposed development e.g. in Ware); and, further, that the Hertford Bypass should also be detailed;
 - (iii) In Corridor 8, as detailed in the Council's previous representations on the emerging LTP, that it should include provision for the further investigation of a bypass of Standon/Puckeridge as a continuation of the Little Hadham bypass. This long-awaited route, the principle of which has been supported by this Council over many years, would not only improve environmental conditions for residents, but would add resilience on the corridor and upgrade to the route on the A120 to make it suitable for anticipated growth both in the county and across its borders in Essex, including amongst this, surface access to Stansted Airport.

- 2.9 In respect of the Cycle Infrastructure Improvement Towns initiative, it is suggested that Buntingford and Sawbridgeworth should also be considered for inclusion in this approach. Concerning the Sustainable Travel Towns, which are largely directed at some of the biggest settlements in the county or where significant opportunities would be available to enable modal shift, following the Council's representations at the 'Vision' stage, the inclusion of Bishop's Stortford in this initiative is welcomed.
- 2.10 However, although the LTP is largely based around the promotion of measures intended to result in a seismic modal shift towards sustainable travel, which would be supported, it is considered that the prospect of this occurring across the county is over-aspirational when taking into account the significant amount of rural communities where, as even the foreword to the LTP states, that 'the only realistic mode of travel for many journeys in the county' is by car. Therefore, it is suggested that, while sustainable journeys are to be aspired to, flexibility needs to be included in the LTP to ensure that "carrots" can actually be delivered before punitive measures involving the "stick" approach are introduced.
- 2.11 Likewise, it is important to ensure that a balance between sustainable journey provision and parking restrictions can be successfully achieved in order to ensure that the economic vitality and viability of town centres are not detrimentally affected. The LTP should therefore recognise that a "one size fits all" approach would not be appropriate and that consideration of the individual characteristics of settlements needs to be undertaken prior to the implementation of schemes.
- 2.12 Furthermore, in respect of the significant amount of planned growth in the county, it is considered that the draft LTP does not go far enough in respect of the implementation of sustainable transport measures for new developments. Therefore, in order to establish green travel patterns for the

residents of new dwellings in major developments before reliance on private motorised transport becomes adopted, sustainable journey opportunities need to be in place from outset of occupation. The LTP therefore needs to provide the framework by providing both a related policy approach, and commitment to funding where schemes cannot be achieved by developer contributions alone.

- 2.13 It is recognised, however, that, in order to achieve planned growth in the county, there will be the need for new road building in some instances. For East Herts, this relates mainly to the A414 corridor and the recognised current constraints at Hertford and Harlow that present impediments to identified growth. Therefore, in order to support development included through allocations in the emerging District Plan, mitigations are detailed around both the proposed implementation of a Hertford Bypass and the consideration of whether a Harlow northern bypass may be required to link the A414 with the new M11 junction 7A. The latter issue is linked to development in the Gilston area in the longer term and work is ongoing between Highways teams at Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils to examine the potential necessity of this intervention. However, as no final position has been reached in this respect, it is considered sensible that the matter is included in the LTP for investigation.
- 2.14 In respect of the former, this would serve to provide the opportunities for greater sustainable travel in Hertford through the Sustainable Travel Town initiative, which, inter alia, could involve one lane of existing carriageway in each direction being devoted to sustainable travel modes. However, it should be noted that some most unfortunate wording is currently included in the text on page 106, which proposes growth in Hertford beyond that included in the emerging District Plan. While the principle of the Bypass scheme has been accepted through the process of developing the District Plan, in order that planned growth to 2033 can be achieved, this Council has categorically not considered

additional growth in Hertford beyond that, and certainly would not do so purely as a potential funding mechanism for a scheme which addresses movement issues on a much wider corridor. It is considered that, as it is the function of East Herts Council (as Planning Authority) and not the County Council (as Transport or other authority) to consider where future growth beyond 2033 should be allocated in the district, HCC is proposing to act considerably beyond its auspices in suggesting where future development should be located. Therefore, while East Herts will certainly involve HCC in work on potential future development scenarios at an appropriate time, this Council should object to the inclusion of the current text in the strongest terms.

Rural Issues

- 2.15 Another area of concern to this Council is the lack of initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of rural communities. While this was flagged up at the previous consultation stage, no specific section is included in the draft LTP4 to accommodate rural transport issues. Given the fact that at least a third of the county would not be covered by a 'Major Scheme', 'Corridor', or other schemes detailed, coupled with the impact that journeys from rural areas can have on urban environments, it is suggested that HCC should give further consideration to this matter and include a rural strategy in the next iteration of the Plan.
- 2.16 This should encompass matters such as the promotion of community transport; demand responsive schemes; and, looking at other innovative measures. This could include, inter alia, schemes such as the potential for 'mini park and ride' initiatives, whereby car parks in villages along regular bus routes could be utilised to both support the economic viability of such services and to reduce the amount of car borne traffic seeking to access urban conurbations; thus reducing congestion and improving air quality and environmental conditions.

Other Matters

- 2.17 Other matters in the draft LTP4 where it is considered that representation should be made by this Council regarding specific elements included in the proposed document are detailed within the Recommendations above, as appropriate. In particular, it is considered that the significance of Stansted Airport has not been recognised in respect of MAG's expansion aspirations to around 43mppa and the effects that this could have in respect of surface access.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

- Hertfordshire County Council's Draft 'Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan' (LTP4) Consultation, November 2017:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/proposal-to-introduce-local-transport-plan-ltp4.aspx>
- NKD Hertfordshire County Council Public Consultation: Hertfordshire 2050 Transport Vision, Autumn 2016:
<http://danssmodgovl01.nexus.internal/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=985>

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