

PROVISIONAL PLAN AND CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

4.1 The provisional West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan has formed the basis of the further Plan development undertaken since July 1999. We were encouraged by DETR comments regarding the provisional Plan and have sought to build upon its strengths and address those areas where further development was required.



The West Yorkshire authority have already attained Centre of Excellence status for developing integrated public transport. They are now seeking the same status for the full range of integrated transport functions

4.2 The development of the full Plan has also reflected the Deputy Prime Minister's endorsement of West Yorkshire as 'an early centre of excellence for integrated transport'. A range of centre of excellence initiatives have been developed through joint working between the six authorities and a strong partnership with other agencies and with bus and rail operators, with the aim of providing practical examples of the development of integrated transport.

4.3 The West Yorkshire Centre of Excellence proposals have three main complementary themes of:

Integrating Public Transport: projects to improve the quality of bus services, develop user friendly ticketing, improve

personal security, develop taxi provision, provide new interchange opportunities and to make public transport travel information more widely available.

Changing Travel Habits: projects to reduce car use for the journey to school, develop innovative approaches to reducing car dependency, develop the use of road user charging technology as a tool for demand management and control of traffic speeds.

Breaking Down Barriers: initiatives on the M1 corridor between Leeds and Sheffield and multi-agency partnership working in a former coalfield area. Progress in implementing Centre of Excellence initiatives is described in the Annual Progress Report.

PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION

Provisional Plan

4.4 Consultation and public participation prior to July 1999, described in the provisional Plan, included meetings with interest groups and business organisations, market research and consultation on mode specific strategies, such as walking and cycling.

Development of Full Plan

4.5 We used the provisional West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan as the basis for comprehensive consultation and participation between September 1999 and June 2000. This included the following activities:

- 85 meetings with community and interest groups at both local and sub-regional level;
- consultation with business organisations through discussion at meetings organised by Chambers of Commerce;

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- distribution of a consultation brochure and questionnaire, which resulted in 2,100 detailed responses;
- discussion at the WYPTA's Passenger Consultative Committees, with membership representing users of public transport services;



The use of the internet for accessing information on both public transport services and the Local Transport Plan is well established in West Yorkshire. The plan website includes facilities for commenting.

- structured market research which involved focus groups to inform the interviewing of 1500 people across the county. This work was supplemented by additional research amongst south Asian origin minority ethnic groups;
- developing a Local Transport Plan website, with facilities for responding to the brochure questionnaire or making other comments;
- submissions from the general public on a range of transport issues, including the development of the local rail network;
- Best Value Performance Plan consultations;
- partnership working with groups across West Yorkshire to develop local solutions to local problems. Examples of this approach are the Aire Valley Integrated Transport Commission and the Keighley Transport Partnership.

4.6 The consultation findings, detailed in a separate report, showed general support for the transport plan objectives and a high degree of consensus on the importance of:

- improving the quality of alternatives to the car;
- reducing traffic speed;
- improving road safety;
- improving the accessibility of the transport system.

4.7 Whilst there was less support for measures to actively discourage car use, a significant proportion (42%) of respondents thought charges to enter town or city centres by car to be acceptable.

4.8 There were a number of areas where consensus did not exist. These included attitudes towards road building and the importance of some major investment proposals. Car users in the structured market research thought that 'people had a right to choose how they travel' whilst also believing that traffic was harming the environment and that traffic congestion was becoming a serious problem.

4.9 The consultation feedback is detailed in a separate report. Key specific messages relating to objectives and overall strategic approach, and the actions taken in response, are summarised in Table 4.1.

4.10 We recognise the importance of public consultation and participation in scheme development and implementation and are developing models to ensure good practice throughout the Plan period.

Objectives		
COMMENT	RESPONDENT(S)	ACTION TAKEN
Environmental and social objectives should be given more priority	Interest and Community Group Seminar	Objectives have been revised and presentation amended to clarify equal status of objectives.
Road traffic reduction should be a fundamental objective of the Plan	Friends of the Earth and other environmental groups	The objective has been amended, but not to the extent sought by respondents (see para. 5.3). A key target is to prevent traffic growth across the Leeds cordon.
Strategic Approach		
COMMENT	RESPONDENT(S)	ACTION TAKEN
The West Yorkshire Authorities should adopt a road user hierarchy.	Friends of the Earth and other environmental groups	An order of consideration is proposed for formal adoption (see para. 9.2)
The plan should include proposals for a West Yorkshire cycle network.	Cycling groups	The development of cycle networks is proposed (see para. 8.8)
Transport infrastructure should be well maintained	Brochure questionnaire respondents	Maintenance is given a high priority within the Plan programme.
Some charging measures (eg charging for workplace parking or motorway use) would be unacceptable	Brochure questionnaire respondents Market research	Such charges are not proposed.
There should be better facilities for disabled people	Brochure questionnaire respondents	The Plan places considerable emphasis on improving the accessibility of the transport system.
More priority should be given to enforcement	Interest and Community Group Seminar	Ongoing discussions are being held with the Police regarding enforcement. The Plan includes provision for investment in camera technology to aid enforcement.
Greater priority should be given to measures to encourage walking	Interest and Community Group Seminar	Pedestrians are placed at the top of the hierarchy of consideration. Greater expenditure is proposed on measures to assist pedestrians.

Table 4.1 Summary of Consultation Responses and Actions

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Review of Objectives

4.11 The objectives set out in the Provisional Local Transport Plan have been reviewed against:

- the objectives of national transport policy set out in DETR guidance;
- the draft regional transport strategy;
- regional economic strategy;
- the broad visions of the West Yorkshire Authorities;
- consultation and participation feedback.

4.12 The provisional Plan objectives have been found to show a good fit against national and regional policies and the broad visions of the West Yorkshire authorities. The consultation and participation feedback suggested that greater emphasis should be placed upon environmental and social objectives. This view has to be considered alongside the regional and sub-regional emphasis on economic development. As a result of these consultation responses the objective on 'equality of access to transport' has been developed to clarify its relationship to a broad social inclusion agenda and to state explicitly that environmental objectives include the issue of noise pollution.

4.13 Consultation and participation has revealed a key divergence of views relating to future traffic levels. Friends of the Earth and other environmental groups have submitted that traffic reduction should be an over-riding objective of the plan and that the Plan should seek to reduce absolute traffic levels within a 5 year period.

"the proposals for cutting car use are a great idea but first public transport should be greatly improved"

4.14 The Integrated Transport Forum and District Council/PTA Steering Group have considered carefully this view and have concluded that:

- the Plan primary objectives should relate to 'high level' strategy outcomes (such as environmental quality or transport efficiency) rather than the means of achieving them. Traffic reduction is an important consideration and should be included as a subsidiary objectives as it is a key means of achieving other objectives;
- a target of reducing absolute traffic levels across West Yorkshire should be supported in principle but, it is considered that this would not be achievable within the five year period because there would be insufficient resources to fully develop high quality alternatives to the car, the associated demand management measures would not be acceptable to the general public and the expected, and much needed, economic growth would generate some additional demand for car travel. The Forum and Steering Group consider that reducing the historic rate of growth in car traffic is achievable and that the overall level of traffic should be stabilised as a pre-condition for reduction in absolute levels. This aspiration is incorporated into the partners' longer term vision for transport in West Yorkshire;
- it would be possible to reduce absolute traffic levels at some local areas, such as city or town centres. This approach is strongly supported by the questionnaire respondents.

Strategy Evaluation and Alternatives Considered.

4.15 DETR guidance relating to full Local Transport Plans requires a fundamental review of transport strategy to ensure consistency with guidance and integrated transport policies more generally. The Guidance also states that,

'In many ways, LTPs are a wider application of the key principles behind the 'package' approach (capital bids under the TPP system based upon multi-modal strategies for defined geographic areas). Authorities should look to develop successful packages and adopt the same basic approach in other areas, where this makes sense.'

4.16 The West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan strategy has evolved from the successful West Yorkshire Transport Package through a five-stage process involving consultation, review, development and evaluation. This process is described below and is summarised in Table 4.2.

4.17 The first stage, undertaken in 1999, was a broad-brush evaluation of the package strategy and revisions and developments required in the light of the Government's Integrated Transport White Paper, associated daughter documents and provisional Local Transport Plan guidance. This review indicated that there was a very high level of consistency between the West Yorkshire strategic approach and Government guidance and that the priority was not to unravel the core strategy elements but rather to ensure that the strategy was developed to reflect the growing emphasis on integration, the new opportunities arising from Government policy and proposed legislation and the emerging regional context. This first stage, completed by July

1999, incorporated the following initiatives:

- the development of Centre of Excellence initiatives, endorsed by the Deputy Prime Minister in June 1999, placing greater priority on integration, including the development of solutions to cross-boundary issues;
- consideration of the role of workplace or road-user charges, resulting in the proposal to (subject to certain conditions) introduce such charges in the centre of Leeds in the provisional Local Transport Plan;
- the further development of a number of topic strategies, with specific strategies relating to cycling and walking being included in the provisional Local Transport Plan;
- the integration of strategies for road safety, highway maintenance and bridge assessment and strengthening within the overall strategic approach;
- the development of a strategic partnership with other key transport providers through the establishment of the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Forum;
- review of public transport options for south Leeds. This work was completed in June 1999 and confirmed Supertram as the most effective public transport system for this key sector of Leeds;
- the development of a comprehensive approach to consultation and participation.

4.18 This work was reflected in the provisional Plan submitted in July 1999. The award of Centre of Excellence status and the generally complimentary comments in the provisional Plan settlement letter demonstrated DETR support for this approach.

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4.19 The second stage, undertaken between September 1999 and March 2000, involved the review of provisional Local Transport Plan objectives to ensure:

- that transport objectives reflected the vision of the West Yorkshire authorities and the aspirations of the people living and working in West Yorkshire. The extensive consultation and participation described in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.10 was a key input to this process;
- consistency with key new European, national and regional policy documents;
- ownership by key stakeholders, including providers of transport infrastructure and services.

4.20 This process, described in paragraphs 4.11 to 4.14, resulted in amendments to the wording of the key objectives and a change to the presentation to clarify that environmental objectives were not subsidiary to economic objectives.

4.21 The third stage, undertaken in parallel with the review of objectives and informed by the same consultation and participation exercises, involved the development of the remaining topic strategies relating to:

- rail development (RailPlan 5);
- bus strategy, including rural areas and the role of community and voluntary transport;
- highway maintenance strategy;
- sustainable freight movement;
- airport surface access;
- social inclusion;
- personal safety.

4.22 In addition, the role of Land Use Plans and their inter-action with transport strategy, was revisited in the light of draft Regional Planning Guidance and draft PPG 13.

4.23 This process of topic strategy development involved numerous considerations of alternative approaches with performance against objectives, value-for-money and consistency with the wider policy framework being key guiding principles. Examples of the amendments made to previous strategies include a greater emphasis on the development of interchange facilities, a recognition of the need for a more flexible range of pre-paid tickets to support the development of Travel Plans, an adoption of a road user 'hierarchy of consideration' (see paragraph 9.2) and greater integration of bus stop accessibility measures as part of highway maintenance programmes.

4.24 The fourth stage involved a thorough re-appraisal of the relationship of all major scheme proposals in relation to the revised Plan objectives and the overall strategic approach. This work was assisted by the appointment of independent consultants.

4.25 The fifth stage, which of necessity is inter-active with stage four, involved an assessment of the overall performance of the provisional Plan strategy in achieving the Plan objectives. This process was informed by the development, by independent consultants, of a strategic transport model producing forecasts of key indicators (such as travel by mode and carbon dioxide emissions).

4.26 The model confirmed the important interaction, central to the Plan strategy, of both improving alternatives to the car as well as implementing a range of measures to discourage car use. The strategic model indicated that the preferred strategy would be successful in reducing the rate of traffic growth and in stabilising traffic in some areas but would not reduce countywide 2006 traffic levels to 1999 levels.

4.27 It is recognised that overall traffic reduction would be a more desirable outcome in terms of achieving the Plan’s environmental objectives. Further strategy tests were carried out in view of the requirements of the Road Traffic Reduction Act and the importance some consultation respondents placed upon the importance of reducing absolute traffic levels. These tests indicated that a trebling of town centre car parking charges would not reduce traffic overall because of trip displacement. In order to reduce the absolute level of road traffic a strategy would need to include (for example):

- a 50% increase in the real cost of fuel (greater than the cumulative effect of the 6% fuel duty escalator dropped in the March 2000 budget);

or

- a 50% reduction of public transport fares;
- a 50% increase in the frequency of public transport services;
- a 50% increase in public transport capacity (in addition to the frequency increase).

Strategic Partnership Development

4.28 The Plan sets out a strategic approach to transport in West Yorkshire. It has been developed in partnership with the key stakeholders through the establishment, in autumn 1998 of the West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Forum, consisting of representatives of:

- other infrastructure providers (Railtrack, Highways Agency, British Waterways Board, Sustrans, Leeds Bradford International Airport);
- service providers (bus, train and taxi companies);
- regional and sub-regional bodies (Government Office, Regional Assembly, West Yorkshire Police, Health Authorities).

4.29 The Forum has played an important role in shaping the development of the full Plan and ensuring commitment to both the strategic approach and the need for synergy between the investment programmes for the key stakeholders.

Best Value

4.30 The Local Government Act, 1999, established principles and procedures to ensure that Best Value is obtained in the delivery of services provided by local authorities. Over a five year period, all services provided by WYPTA and the District Councils will be subject to fundamental Best Value reviews to ensure that high standards are achieved and they provide good value for money. The authorities also have to prepare annual Best Value Performance Plans, which include reports on the review process and Best Value Indicators. The indicators help to measure the performance of the authorities in comparison with similar organisations and, over time, will measure progress in improving performance.

4.31 The Local Transport Plan will form an important policy input to relevant service reviews and is an important means through which performance as measured by relevant indicators will be improved. Proposals set out in the Plan may be modified if the review process establishes better ways of achieving our objectives. Relevant Best Value Indicators and the review timetable are included in the Annual Progress Report. Future Reports will include the conclusions from reviews that have been completed and discuss the implications for the Plan.

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Provisional Plan		Full Plan	
INPUTS	REVIEWS	INPUTS	REVIEWS
TPP Package Strategy	Integration of road safety, highway maintenance and bridge assessment / strengthening within an overall strategic approach	DETR guidance Draft Regional Planning Guidance	Strategy review to ensure consistency with DETR guidance and regional planning documents
DETR guidance Advice relating to the development of Regional Planning Guidance and Regional Transport Strategies	Strategy review to ensure consistency with DETR guidance and regional planning documents	Strategic model developed by TRL	Review of alternative strategic options
West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Forum	Development of strategic partnerships	Studies undertaken by Oscar Faber and SDG for schemes in Leeds and Wakefield.	Review of all major scheme proposals to ensure value for money and consistency with Plan objectives
Study undertaken by MVA	Initial development of a strategy for rail development	Study undertaken by MVA Input from interest groups Consultation with Rail Industry and local authorities	Development of RailPlan 5
Studies undertaken by MVA and Price Waterhouse Cooper	The development of proposals for road user charging in Leeds	LTP and Best Value consultations	Development of a Bus Strategy
Study undertaken by SDG	Review of public transport options in South Leeds	Liaison with freight operators	Development of a freight strategy
Inputs from all partners	West Yorkshire Centre of Excellence proposals	Airport Access Forum Study undertaken by Babtis Strategic model developed by TRL Monitoring results Attitudinal surveys and other feedback	Development of strategies relating to interchange, social inclusion and personal safety Development of a surface access strategy to Leeds Bradford International Airport Development of targets, including those required by the Road Traffic Reduction Act Development of good practice Development of a cycling network Development of an 'Order of Consideration'

Table 4.2 Strategy Review