

Dear Mikki

Local Transport Plan (LTP) Review - Public Consultation

Thank you for taking the opportunity to comment on the draft LTP for consultation. The LTP review process commenced in the summer of 2018. A draft LTP for consultation was made available between: January 16th - March 26th, 2020. We reached 23,000 stakeholders through events, face to face meetings and online. GCC received and considered a large number of written responses, the LTP Consultation Report available on www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ltp-review, sets out in detail the feedback received.

The FEP responded on the wide range of transport issues presented and the County Council has considered these views. With regard to Mobility as a Service (MaaS), GCC acknowledges FEP's support for this as a longer term ambition in the LTP. We would be interested to understand the proposed MaaS and Transport Study projects being developed by FEP.

FEP felt it was difficult to respond to policy regarding the county's bus network. The Gloucestershire Bus Frequency Map was in development at the time of publishing the draft LTP. GCC recognises the need to improve rural connectivity through a variety of interventions. The LTP seeks to strengthen the overall mobility offer in rural areas, including conventional bus services on key routes, demand responsive bus services and wider mobility solutions such as car sharing or car clubs. The identification of Local Interchange Hubs, will be a central component of this rural mobility strategy, as a focal point, where these mobility solutions come together and passengers can change from one to the other. Interchange Hubs also provide an opportunity to encourage increased levels of physical activity amongst transport users by linking to key cycle routes.

With respect to cycling as a mode, the FEP expresses the view that there are gaps in the network – or potential network – around Newent and Dymock, where signed routes are in place. Forest NDPs highlight the importance of public footpaths/multi-use tracks for connectivity for outlying residents to access facilities where there is a main road without a pavement. There is no district cycle network so therefore the FEP questions how it can be promoted. Cycling is a key activity for the District but there is no shared map of all routes to enable wider take-up and the provision of enhanced facilities. There are opportunities across the District to create business/study and leisure routes from the existing networks of roads, paths and tramways, to be mapped. In response, GCC would clarify that the Countywide Cycleway desire lines were developed in response to *growth* corridors in the adopted Local Plans. The cycle scheme priorities for the county match the desire lines between major employment and housing sites, and goes further to include Newent in the LTP scheme. The LTP discussed provision for cycling in 3 categories, ambition (cycle desire lines), Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan or LCWIP (local) and LTP Schemes Priorities (strategic). LCWIP will provide the detail on access to main strategic routes. It is important to note that any proposed cycle scheme or demand for improvements to cycle connectivity may be proposed through NDPs and Local Plans and, subject to feasibility and deliverability, may be brought forward through these mechanisms. Cycling is an optimal mode of transport

for local trips in any part of the county and the strategic cycleway does not preclude the development of those.

We also note that the FEP are surprised that no interchange hub proposed for Lydney Station. It was pointed out that the bus does not link to both up and down trains even though there are minutes between, and the station is very inhospitable at night. In response GCC commits to reviewing all of our maps and ensuring that Lydney Station is recognised as a strategic interchange. GCC continues to work with train and bus operators to put pressure on greater rail/bus connectivity. The active travel connection to Lydney Station has been completed supported by GCC and GFirst LEP Growth Deal resource to increase connectivity around Lydney linking together Aylburton, Lydney Town Centre, Railway Station, Dean Academy, and residential developments.

(<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/highways/major-projects-list/lydney-cycling-improvements/>)

The LTP proposes the implementation of Transport Interchange Hubs is a corner stone of GCC's ambitions to promote sustainable modes of transport. The emerging draft LTP identifies two types of Transport Interchange Hubs: Strategic Interchange Hubs and Local Interchange Hubs. Strategic Transport Interchange Hubs are defined as located on, or have the potential to attract, very high frequency transport corridors, 'core super routes' and having significant parking for cars and bikes, following the Park and Ride concept. Local Interchange Hubs are defined as; in key locations in/near rural towns or on urban residential roads (but may not have dedicated parking), situated on dedicated cycle routes or near private car parking where sufficient demand and commercial viability exist. All railway stations should be enabled to fulfil interchange hub functions for maximum integration with all modes and onward connectivity. Interchange hubs can provide the connectivity with inter-urban and rural communities, link demand responsive services such as community transport with public transport and active travel opportunities for improved connectivity to a wider transport user group. Interchange Hubs also provide an opportunity to encourage increased levels of physical activity amongst transport users by providing cycle parking facilities.

The FEP is concerned that 'Thinktravel', which the LTP advocates, is only of use if it is kept up to date and accessible. GCC recognises that the Thinktravel behaviour change programme was initially funded through Local Sustainable Transport Funding (LSTF), and successfully influenced the travel behaviour change in a number of areas, workplaces, schools and communities. The legacy of Thinktravel is a strong sustainable transport brand and a small Thinktravel Team that continue to work with employers, schools and communities to support mode shift. The Thinktravel webpage supports Traveline, but it also has a number of legacy resources useful for communities, such as the Thinktravel CIC Toolkit. Therefore, whilst recognising that 'Thinktravel' will require investment and further development to grow its brand and role, its importance within LTP remains unchanged.

A key concern of the FEP is that the LTP does not appear to account for the opportunities and impacts of the Western Gateway and freight, especially as increased trade and traffic

will require an alternative route when the Severn Bridges are closed. FEP has inferred that the ambition might be more than 1 mainline station in the district given perhaps the need for a new garden village. Already there is a significant uptake in usage at Lydney Station. Studies need to be made into the suitable reinstatement of a rail/light rail plus pedestrian/cycle crossing between Lydney and Sharpness to reduce congestion at pinch points, increase resilience not least for the Severn tunnel and to exploit the Bristol and South Wales Metro opportunities within a Western Gateway. GCC has closely considered these observations, as such it is in the process of reviewing CPS2 Forest, The Place, Issues and Opportunities. In the light of FEP's concerns, GCC is also giving close reconsideration to issues of regional rail priorities and freight logistics to the Forest economy.

Finally the FEP advises that in the district significant use is made of Chepstow and Severn Tunnel Junction to access services to South Wales and to the East. Both impact on travel through Chepstow. Given that the plans for the South Wales Metro potentially include Lydney as a place to turn around the trains; this is an opportunity missed to connect South Wales to Metro West and the Forest to Bristol or Gloucester. This rails crossing is explicitly mentioned in the Western Gateway proposal. Need also to consider an additional mainline station for the District. GCC have taken these comments into consideration the LTP in the light of this, and consider adding to the longer-term strategic transport priorities beyond 2031, to work with our partners to investigate the potential for a new station between Lydney and Gloucester in conjunction with the county growth strategy

The consultation analysis has picked up on the document itself; the length of the LTP and the ability to navigate and clearly understand how the LTP vision and objectives translate into LTP policy, expected outcomes and investment priorities. We are intending to review the structure of the LTP to shorten and provide clarity in line with our sustainability assessment. And we will produce an LTP Summary document to provide an overview of the transport strategy for Gloucestershire. We will publish these documents on our website www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ltp-review following adoption of the LTP early in 2021.

Please note that this is an officer level response, we are still in the process of reviewing the LTP, following consultation feedback and that the final revised LTP will be approved by Scrutiny, Cabinet and County Council.

Transport Planning & Strategic Infrastructure