

INFRASTRUCTURE (STRATEGIC CHALLENGES)

Highway capacity
Highway infrastructure need
Sustainable transport
Developer contributions
Viability
High quality communications
Education
Walking and cycling infrastructure
Public transport



***Oadby and Wigston
Borough Council
Leicestershire***

Highways capacity

What the government says:

- 4.1 The NPPF states that the *‘planning system should actively manage patterns of growth... Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making’.*
- 4.2 The NPPF also suggests that planning policies should be prepared in cooperation with key stakeholders, including:
- The local highways authority;
 - Other transport infrastructure providers and operators; and
 - Neighbouring councils.
- 4.3 Collaborative working on strategies and investment plans is deemed to be critical for supporting the delivery of sustainable transport options and aligned growth patterns throughout the country.
- 4.4 Further, NPPF suggest that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of Plan making so that the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.

What the Council says:

- 4.5 The Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a relatively small, compact and urbanised Borough that shares its boundaries with Leicester City, Blaby District and Harborough District. The entire urban area of the Borough sits within the area known as the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA). The Leicester PUA is defined as the built up area that is centred on Leicester. With the Borough area also being directly adjacent to the City of Leicester, the two share a strong spatial relationship, despite the differences in size and population.
- 4.6 The Borough is crossed by three main transport routes that serve the City of Leicester; the A6, the A5199 and the B5366. The B582 serves as the only transport route linking the settlements of Oadby and Wigston and one of only two routes linking Wigston with South Wigston, the other being B5418. The A563 links the very northern parts of Wigston and Oadby with Leicester City and provides a form of access to the M1 and M69 motorways. In general the Borough’s access to main arterial routes such as the M1, A14 and the A47 is poor. Due to this poor access to main arterial routes and the fact that the three routes into Leicester City from the south pass through the Borough, the Borough’s roads suffer from significant congestion, particularly at peak times.
- 4.7 Significant congestion is apparent at many of the junctions within the Borough, as well as along its routes. At peak times, traffic flows along a number of the main routes within the Borough are significantly hampered by congestion.



- 4.8 In recent history, there has been isolated and / or ad-hoc highway and transport improvements related to new developments, but nothing of a strategic scale that positively impacts the existing highway and transport infrastructure, and / or relieves pressure on the highways network. Therefore, new development continually adds pressure to the, already stretched, existing transport and highways network. Should this continue, there will become a time whereby the existing highway and infrastructure network just cannot cope with the demands placed upon it. As evidence for the current Local Plan, the Council, in partnership with Leicestershire County Council and other neighbouring authorities, produced the South East Leicestershire Transport Strategy (SELTS). The strategy set out how growth impacted the existing highway network and identified possible (larger scale) mitigation measures. It is expected that the SELTS work will be updated to take account of additional growth over the new Plan period.
- 4.9 To ensure that the Borough's highways and transport network can cope now, and for years to come, larger scale strategic intervention needs to occur. The proposals set out within the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan allows for this larger scale strategic intervention, however does rely on cooperation between all Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities to deliver it. The Strategic Growth Plan proposals are situated within other local authority areas, therefore the Council does not have sole control in terms of bringing the proposals forward. Further, the proposal would need to be brought forward by the County Council as the local highways authority.
- 4.10 Currently, the Council is working with all local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire to produce a strategic transport assessment (STA). Currently no transport modelling data information is available from this project, however when complete, the STA will set out the strategic transport need for each of the local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire. In addition, the Council will be working with the County Council as the local highways authority and neighbouring local authorities to produce more localised transport evidence to underpin the new Local Plan.

Potential options:

- Seek to deliver larger scale transport and highway interventions, for example, those set out within the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan, in an attempt to reduce congestion and traffic within the Borough area.
- Continue to implement smaller scale isolated remedial works that do not take account of the overall strategic highway network, and which could 'shift' congestion rather than mitigating it.

Questions:

- Should the Council and the County Council (as the local highways authority) be seeking delivery of larger scale transport and highway interventions in an attempt to reduce the current levels of congestion within the Borough area?
- Should the Council and the County Council (as the local highways authority) be accepting that congestion will only ever increase over the Plan period as and when new development comes forward?
- What transport and highway interventions do you think the Council and the County Council (as the local highways authority) should consider to improve congestion within the Borough area?

Highways infrastructure need

What the government says:

- 4.11 The NPPF states that the *‘planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making’.*
- 4.12 The NPPF also suggests that planning policies should be prepared in cooperation with key stakeholders, including:
- The local highways authority;
 - Other transport infrastructure providers and operators; and
 - Neighbouring councils.
- 4.13 Collaborative working on strategies and investment plans is deemed to be critical for supporting the delivery of sustainable transport options and aligned growth patterns throughout the country.

What the Council says:

- 4.14 Currently, the Council is working with all local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire to produce a strategic transport assessment (STA). Currently no transport modelling data information is available from this project, however when complete, the STA will set out the strategic transport need for each of the local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire. In addition, the Council will be working with the County Council as the local highways authority and neighbouring local authorities to produce more localised transport evidence to underpin the new Local Plan.
- 4.15 Following on from the Borough Council’s most recent Call for Sites exercise, the Council actively engaged with all key stakeholders and statutory consultees in summer 2021, highlighting to all parties from the outset, where the known potential growth options may come forward. The exercise took place to ascertain whether or not there were any ‘showstoppers’ that would prevent any of the potential sites coming forward should they be needed.
- 4.16 The Borough Council will continue active and ongoing engagement and dialogue throughout the preparation of the new Local Plan to ensure that the potential growth options that come forward are appropriately assessed and that any highways infrastructure requirements are factored into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Whole Plan Viability Assessment where known.
- 4.17 The Council’s current planning policy position on the delivery of Sustainable Transport and Initiatives is set out in Policy 26 of the adopted Local Plan. It recognises that the Council is committed to encouraging sustainable methods of transport. A key principle in achieving sustainable travel patterns and transport methods is the implementation of travel plans for developments that have a significant traffic impact. Accordingly, travel plans are currently expected in support of all major development proposals.



Potential options:

- Set out in Local Plan Policy that all residential developments that meet the 'large site' threshold of 10 or more dwellings, must provide contributions to support the delivery of local / strategic highway infrastructure solutions.
- Set out in Local Plan Policy that all residential developments regardless of size will be required to provide contributions to support the delivery of local / strategic highway infrastructure solutions.
- No policy wording encouraging or requiring the provision of contributions to support the delivery of local / strategic highway infrastructure solutions.

Questions:

- Should the Council require all development to provide contributions to support the delivery of local / strategic highway infrastructure solutions?
- Should the Council encourage applicants to provide contributions to support the delivery of local / strategic highway infrastructure solutions?
- What transport and infrastructure solutions do you consider are required so that growth can come forward in the future?
- Which option from the above set of potential options would be the most appropriate for the Borough area?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also, if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



Sustainable transport

What the government says:

- 4.18 The NPPF is clear in that it states that transport issues and infrastructure solutions should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals. In doing so, plans can seek to address any potential transport impacts, encourage more sustainable forms of movement and embrace changing transport technology. In addition, cross-boundary and agency solutions can also be better aligned to deliver the most sustainable growth patterns across the wider area.
- 4.19 With regards to sustainable transport solutions, the NPPF recognises that *'opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use'* should be identified and pursued. The Framework also states that Plans should contain policies that seek to *'provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)'*.
- 4.20 The Department for Transport states that economic growth is one of the biggest challenges for transport. Transport's role in this is hugely important – getting people to work and to services such as education and healthcare providers, as well to leisure activities and shops, is crucial to quality of life and wellbeing.

What the Council says:

- 4.21 Due to the predominantly urban nature of the Borough and its spatial relationship with Leicester City and the wider strategic transport network, the Borough's road network can become extremely congested, particularly at peak times. This leads to delays and at times, poor air quality in some local 'hotspots'. The main routes into the City of Leicester, namely the A6 and the A5199, as well as the Boroughs east to west routes leading to the surrounding network, experience significant delays during peak-traffic times.
- 4.22 The Council's adopted Local Plan recognises that the importance of addressing these issues via its spatial objectives relating to public transport in the Borough, as well as Policy 26 – Sustainable Transport and Initiatives. The Policy approach in the current Local Plan seeks to improve east west public transport links between South Wigston, Wigston and Oadby, and to establish fast and frequent public transport to key services, facilities and the retail centre of Leicester. It also safeguards the Potential Transport Route (former EDDR) in Oadby.
- 4.23 The Council's current Local Plan also seeks to prioritise the use of 'sustainable modes' of transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport, over private cars, through requiring all development to comply with Leicestershire County Council's latest version of the Highways Design Guide, which includes car parking standards that apply to any proposals for development in the Borough.

Potential options:

- Set out in Local Plan Policy that all residential and / or large scale non-residential developments must provide on-site infrastructure or an off-site contribution to support the delivery of local / strategic sustainable transport solutions.
- Continue with existing policy approach, as per the Council's adopted Local Plan Policy 26: Sustainable Transport and Initiatives, ensuring that it is up-to-date with national planning policy and guidance.

- No policy wording encouraging or requiring the provision of on-site infrastructure or an off-site contribution to support the delivery of local / strategic sustainable transport solutions.

Questions:

- Should the Council continue with existing policy approach (or similar) in the current Local Plan?
- Should the Council develop a Local Policy requiring that all residential and / or large scale non-residential developments must provide on-site infrastructure or an off-site contribution to support the delivery of local / strategic sustainable transport solutions?
- Should the Council develop a Local Policy that actively promotes and encourages sustainable transport and discourages the use of the private car?
- Should the Council promote improved technology and traffic management solutions to address congestion, delays and air quality issues in the Borough?
- Should the Council allow for development and accept that junctions and links will continue to operate above capacity?
- Which option from the above set of potential options would be the most appropriate for the Borough area?
- Should the Council continue to safeguard the Potential Transport Route (former EDDR) in Oadby? If so, please provide justification / evidence of its need.

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate, please explain.



Developer contributions

What the government says:

- 4.24 The NPPF states that *'plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan'*.
- 4.25 As set out in Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following three tests: a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; b) directly related to the development; and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 4.26 Local planning authorities should seek to consider the implications that new growth will place upon an area and to ensure that the economic, environmental, social and other infrastructure demands are in place to support the needs of new residents, as well as the wider community.

What the Council says:

- 4.27 Developer contributions (sometimes also referred to as planning obligations) are used to address specific planning issues arising from a development scheme that cannot be mitigated through planning conditions. Developer contributions are set out in legal agreements under the provisions of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). They may be agreed between the Council, the County Council, landowners and developers, or, they may also be unilaterally proposed by a landowner and agreed by the Council.
- 4.28 In addition to affordable housing and transport infrastructure, there will be substantial requirements for other forms of infrastructure such as new schools, health facilities, open space and community buildings, as well as other types of infrastructure associated with 'utilities' such as power, water and telecommunications. Some schools and health facilities in the Borough are operating close to, or above, their optimum capacity. Further growth in areas with capacity constraints has the potential for adverse impacts on new and existing communities and therefore the impact of new growth must be mitigated accordingly.
- 4.29 The Council's current Local Plan Policy 46 Infrastructure and Developer Contributions seeks to ensure that all new growth is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure. This is identified in policies associated with allocations and in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 4.30 The Council will always ensure that the appropriate enabling infrastructure is provided where any development has a negative impact. The Council will seek contributions through onsite provision, or via off-site contributions whether they be physical provision or financial contributions.

Potential options:

- Tackle capacity constraints within some services and facilities, such as health facilities and schools, by seeking contributions from all new development to accommodate increases in the population, therefore necessitating increases in capacity for these services and facilities.
- Ensure that all new development has access to all necessary services and facilities.
- Seek to establish trigger points to meet the infrastructure needs in a timely and viable manner and have certainty of delivery and ongoing management.



- Ensure that all new development has access to all necessary utilities including water, power, and telecommunications.

Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current Local Plan policy relating to Infrastructure and Developer Contributions ensuring that it is up-to-date with national policy and guidance?
- Should the Council seek to develop a new Policy approach to meeting its infrastructure and developer contribution needs?
- Should the Council only allow development where there is demonstrable capacity or certainty of delivery of infrastructure such as schools / health services etc?
- What do you consider to be the most important service or facility and should all development contribute towards the service or facility regardless of its cost?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



Viability

What the government says:

4.31 The NPPF states that *‘all viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available’*. In addition to this, the NPPF also states that *‘planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability’*.

4.32 The importance of the role that viability assessments play in plan making and decision taking cannot be underestimated. The Government recognises that viability assessments require collaboration and discussions from all sectors to get it right. The National Planning Practice Guidance states that:

‘The role for viability assessment is primarily at the plan making stage. Viability assessment should not compromise sustainable development but should be used to ensure that policies are realistic, and that the total cumulative cost of all relevant policies will not undermine deliverability of the plan.

It is the responsibility of plan makers in collaboration with the local community, developers and other stakeholders, to create realistic, deliverable policies. Drafting of plan policies should be iterative and informed by engagement with developers, landowners, and infrastructure and affordable housing providers.

Policy requirements, particularly for affordable housing, should be set at a level that takes account of affordable housing and infrastructure needs and allows for the planned types of sites and development to be deliverable, without the need for further viability assessment at the decision making stage.

It is the responsibility of site promoters to engage in plan making, take into account any costs including their own profit expectations and risks, and ensure that proposals for development are policy compliant. Policy compliant means development which fully complies with up to date plan policies. A decision maker can give appropriate weight to emerging policies. The price paid for land is not a relevant justification for failing to accord with relevant policies in the plan. Landowners and site purchasers should consider this when agreeing land transactions’.

What the Council says:

4.33 As the Plan preparation progresses, the Council will seek to engage with all key stakeholders and delivery partners to ensure that the development of new policies and allocations will allow the Council to explore options for delivering growth, whilst seeking the necessary infrastructure. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be used in order to identify the type of infrastructure required, its cost, delivery agency, phasing and funding sources.

4.34 Due to the complexity of the viability assessment production process, it will be crucial that the Council seeks to proactively engage with all sectors of the industry to ensure that sustainable developments and prosperous growth ensues. Ultimately, the Council needs to ensure that the new Local Plan contributes all it can to the local community, whilst ensuring that all development and growth proposed can be delivered.



4.35 The Council's current Local Plan policy seeks to ensure that all new growth is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure, services and facilities. This is identified in policies associated with allocations and in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Potential options:

- Seek to develop a Whole Plan Viability Assessment in collaboration with all key stakeholders, developers and the community.
- Seek to establish a prioritisation of infrastructure requirements in the Borough to ensure that critical infrastructure comes forward in a timely manner to support the delivery of successful and sustainable growth.

Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current Local Plan policy relating to Infrastructure and Developer Contributions ensuring that it is up-to-date with national policy and guidance that takes into account the requirement to develop a whole Plan Viability Assessment?
- Should the Council seek to develop a new Policy approach to meeting its infrastructure and developer contribution needs that takes into account the requirement to develop a whole Plan Viability Assessment?
- Do you consider that there is a piece of infrastructure, service and / or facility that needs to be delivered regardless of the cost?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



High quality communications

What the government says:

4.36 NPPF states that *'advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution)'*.

What the Council says:

4.37 The Council is committed in ensuring it does all it can do in relation to providing local communities and businesses with high quality and reliable communications.

4.38 The current Local Plan does not set out any planning policy requiring development proposal to provide high quality communications, however it is expected that the new Local Plan will.

Potential options:

- Require all development proposals to provide the infrastructure for 5G phone service and / or high speed fibre broadband to every new home or unit.
- Not have a requirement to provide the infrastructure for 5G phone service and / or high speed fibre broadband.

Questions:

- Should the Council require all development proposals to provide the infrastructure for 5G phone service and / or high speed fibre broadband to every new home or unit?
- If the Council was to require all development proposals to provide the infrastructure for 5G phone service and / or high speed fibre broadband to every new home or unit, what evidence would the Council need to underpin / justify this requirement?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



Education

What the government says:

- 4.39 The NPPF states that *‘to ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted’*.
- 4.40 National Planning Practice Guidance states that local authorities with education responsibilities should forecast the need for new school places and report this to the Government through an annual school capacity survey. They consider natural population change such as birth rates, the effects of parental choice, and estimate additional needs from new housing with reference to pupil numbers from recent developments and other evidence.
- 4.41 The Department for Education has published the ‘Securing developer contributions for education’ guidance for local authorities on estimating pupil numbers from new housing and securing contributions for the creation of additional school places for all education phases (age 0-19 years and special educational needs) over the plan period’.

What the Council says:

- 4.42 By working positively with Leicestershire County Council, as the Education Authority, the Council will seek to ensure that the Education Authority takes into account ‘Securing developer contributions for education’ guidance and as part of its ongoing engagement in the new Local Plan production.
- 4.43 The Council will continue to engage with all of its partners from the Local Education Authority, Public Health, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group / NHS, Leicestershire Police and other infrastructure delivery partners as the preparation of this new Local Plan progresses. Under the Duty to Co-operate process and at the appropriate time with individual site promoters, it will also be appropriate to assess the deliverability and ongoing management of infrastructure in the Borough.
- 4.44 Policy 3 – Regeneration Schemes and Large Scale Change, in the current Local Plan recognises the importance of collaboration and communication with all statutory consultees, in particular, in relation to assessing infrastructure needs to support the delivery of sustainable growth and place making. It states, *‘where regeneration schemes or large scale change is proposed, the earliest liaison between the applicant, the Borough Council and Leicestershire County Council Highways Department and Education Department (and Leicester City Council where relevant) is essential’*.
- 4.45 The Council will need to revisit and review its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) as part of the production of the new Local Plan. The Council’s current IDP contains a ‘live’ infrastructure project list that will need updating. The document will identify all local and strategic infrastructure deemed necessary to support sustainable growth in the Borough over the new Plan period, including provision of education facilities.
- 4.46 At this time, a piece of work is being undertaken on behalf of all Leicester and Leicestershire Local Planning Authorities to consider the infrastructure requirements up to the year 2050, including those to meet educational need.



4.47 The Borough Council will seek to proactively engage with the Education Authority at every stage of production on the new Local Plan. Indeed, early engagement with the Education Authority suggests that developer contributions from all qualifying sites of 10 or more units (major developments) will be required to contribute towards the costs of additional educational infrastructure to meet that additional demand that will be placed upon school infrastructure over the next Plan period.

Potential options:

- Prioritise infrastructure based on viability and identified need, and include all items in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and relevant Policies, as appropriate.
- Ensure that the Developer Contributions mechanisms are fully up to date and take into account the Education Authority's desired approach to delivering Education Infrastructure over the Plan period.
- Require only large scale development to contribute towards education provision.
- Continue to work closely with all relevant stakeholders, throughout both the Local Plan process and planning application process
- Only apply the policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.

Questions:

- Should the Council require all development proposals, regardless of size, to contribute towards delivery of educational infrastructure?
- Should the Council consider any of the other options set out above appropriate?
- Should the Council only apply the policy principles and guidance set at a national level through the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance?
- Do you consider that there are current issues with education provision within the Borough area?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



Walking and cycling infrastructure

What the government says:

- 4.48 In relation to the Government's recognition of the importance of the health agenda, the NPPF recognises that *'planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: ... c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling'*.
- 4.49 Further, the NPPF states that *'transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: ... opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued...'*.
- 4.50 The NPPF also states that *'planning policies should: ... provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)'*.

What the Council says:

- 4.51 It is inevitable that the Borough's population will need to travel for employment, leisure, recreation, education, and other reasons people choose to move and travel. With regard to the Borough's geographical location in relation to the City of Leicester and south-east Leicestershire, it is possible that many people could choose sustainable transport options for many of these journeys, provided safe and attractive infrastructure options are in place to encourage it.
- 4.52 The Council's current Local Plan Policy on Sustainable Transport and Initiatives (Policy 26) requires all new developments to be *'located and designed to; reduce the need to travel by the private motor vehicle; enhance the safety of pedestrians and other road users; encourage the use of cycling as a sustainable mode of transport; and, improve accessibility for residents, particularly in locations where there is poor transport choice and availability'*.
- 4.53 The Council is committed to doing all it can to positively impact the local communities health and well-being, and will seek the provision of high quality walking and cycling routes where appropriate and possible to do so. The Council will continue to work closely with the County Council and neighbouring authorities to ensure that there is both a local and strategic approach to walking and cycling infrastructure.

Potential options:

- Continue with the existing or similar Policy approach, as set out within the current Local Plan
- Consider setting a requirement for sites (of a certain size) to provide on-site walking and cycling infrastructure solutions, and / or, off-site contributions towards walking and cycling infrastructure and sustainable transport solutions in the local area.

Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current policy approach set out in Local Plan (relevant parts of) Policy 26 – Sustainable Transport and Initiatives, ensuring that it is up to date with current national planning policy and guidance?



- Should the Council draft a new Policy to address Walking and Cycling Infrastructure needs in the Borough, taking account of up to date national planning policy and guidance, as well as local evidence?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.



Public transport

What the government says:

- 4.54 The NPPF recognises the crucial role that public transport and sustainable methods of transport will play in creating more sustainable places in the future. With regards to promoting sustainable transport, the document sets out that *‘the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth ... Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making’.*
- 4.55 The NPPF also states that *‘planning policies should: ... be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned’.*
- 4.56 The National Planning Practice Guidance states that *‘it is important for local planning authorities to undertake an assessment of the transport implications in developing or reviewing their Local Plan so that a robust transport evidence base may be developed to support the preparation and/or review of that Plan. A robust transport evidence base can facilitate approval of the Local Plan and reduce costs and delays to the delivery of new development, thus reducing the burden on the public purse and private sector. The transport evidence base should identify the opportunities for encouraging a shift to more sustainable transport usage, where reasonable to do so; and highlight the infrastructure requirements for inclusion in infrastructure spending plans linked to the Community Infrastructure Levy, section 106 provisions and other funding sources’.*
- 4.57 The Department for Transport (DfT) states that economic growth is one of the biggest challenges for transport. Transport’s role in this is hugely important – getting people to work and to services such as education and healthcare providers, as well to leisure activities and shops, is crucial to quality of life and wellbeing.
- 4.58 The DfT’s Circular 02/2013 *‘strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development’* is also a document that local planning authorities are required to refer to. It explains how the Highways Agency (Highways England) will engage with the planning system. It also gives details on how Highways Agency will fulfil its remit to be a delivery partner for sustainable economic growth whilst maintaining, managing and operating a safe and efficient strategic road network.

What the Council says:

- 4.59 The Council is committed to encouraging sustainable travel patterns through all development proposals. A key principle in achieving sustainable travel patterns and transport methods is the implementation of travel plans for developments that will have a significant traffic impact.
- 4.60 Accordingly, travel plans have been expected in support of all major development proposals in recent years, having been required in Policy 26 – Sustainable Travel and Initiatives in the current Local Plan.
- 4.61 The Council will continue to work closely with Leicestershire County Council as the local highways authority and positively impact the provision of public transport in all new developments.



Potential options:

- Continue with the existing or similar Policy approach, as set out within the current Local Plan.
- Consider setting a requirement for sites (of a certain size) to provide on-site public transport infrastructure solutions, and / or, off-site contributions towards sustainable public transport solutions in the local area.

Questions:

- Should the Council 'roll forward' the current policy approach set out in Local Plan (relevant parts of) Policy 26 – Sustainable Transport and Initiatives, ensuring that it is up to date with current national planning policy and guidance?
- Should the Council draft a new Policy to address public transport infrastructure needs in the Borough, taking account of up to date national planning policy and guidance, as well as local evidence?
- Do you consider that the current public transport provision within the Borough area is adequate or does it need to be improved?

Please explain your answer in a few words. Also if there are other options that you feel are more appropriate please explain.

