

Open Report on behalf of Paul Coathup, Assistant Director Highways and Transportation

Report to:	Executive Councillor for Highways Transport and IT
Date:	16 July 2014
Subject:	Sleaford Transport Strategy
Decision Reference:	
Key decision?	No

Summary:

Lincolnshire County Council and North Kesteven District Council share a vision to improve accessibility and enhance the sustainability of travel in Sleaford to support economic growth in this historic market town.

Transport is a fundamental part of achieving this vision and working in partnership the councils have developed the Sleaford Transport Strategy to help identify and prioritise a range of measures. These will support growth by helping manage existing and future travel needs, and creating a better environment for everyone living in, working in or visiting Sleaford.

The Strategy will help to address existing transport and travel issues within Sleaford town centre and the surrounding area. It will also help support proposals for significant growth in the short, medium and long term whilst helping mitigate any impacts associated with that growth.

Recommendation(s):

That the Executive Councillor endorses Sleaford Transport Strategy.

Alternatives Considered:

Reasons for Recommendation:

To assist in the promotion of growth and mitigate the impact on the transport Network in Sleaford.

1. Background

There are significant plans for the expansion of Sleaford over the coming years. While a Masterplan for the town has been produced and a Parking Strategy is being implemented, unlike a number of the other larger settlements in Lincolnshire, the town lacks a Transport Strategy that robustly assesses the transport implications of the proposed expansion and sets out a range of measures to resolve any resulting issues and take account of opportunities presented. The Strategy will enable transport improvements to be proactively planned as part of the delivery of development commitments, integrating strategic land use policy with informed planning for transport infrastructure and services.

The Strategy sets out an approach to improve transport and travel in Sleaford whilst supporting future growth. As such the Strategy seeks to address existing issues and capitalise on current and future opportunities.

To identify these issues and opportunities a wide variety of data, evidence and local views were collated and assessed. This has been used to set the scene for the development of this Strategy and understand the issues and opportunities in and around Sleaford.

Staged Development

The Sleaford Transport Strategy was developed using a six stage process overseen by a Steering Group which consisted of representatives from both Lincolnshire County Council and North Kesteven District Council as well as representatives from Mouchel who are the County Council's Private Sector Partner. The six stages were:

- **Stage 1 – Inception**

The Inception Stage of the study comprised early preparatory tasks and the first study meeting. The inception meeting, attended by the Steering Group, covered the confirmation and agreement of various elements of the commission including the methodology and programme.

- **Stage 2 – Evidence Gathering and Analysis**

The second stage of the process reviewed all pertinent information and data on recent trends in the strategy area that had a bearing on transport and travel matters. Traffic modelling was included in this stage to assess the potential impacts of committed and proposed developments in the strategy area. This stage also included the identification of issues and opportunities.

- **Stage 3 – Option Identification**

The option identification stage took the issues and opportunities and provided a 'long list' of options. Any options already identified as part of previous studies and strategies were included in this process.

- Stage 4 – Initial Option Sifting

The 'long list' of options produced in Stage 3 was sifted using an appraisal framework to provide a short list for further analysis.

- Stage 5 – Assessment of Short-listed Options

The short-listed options were assessed, where appropriate, through further use of the Sleaford traffic model.

- Stage 6 – Final Transport Strategy

This final stage has produced the draft Strategy as presented within this report.

Key Themes

The vision set out within the Strategy is based around eight key themes. These themes set the agenda for the future development of Sleaford and are based on current policy. They provide context to this Strategy which seeks to address current problems, meet the needs of the future, provide more travel options and create better environments for everyone.

The eight themes are:

- Sustainable development
- Carbon emissions and climate change
- Accessibility
- Sustainable transport
- Built and natural environment
- Efficient and convenient transport network
- Safety and security
- Health and wellbeing

Objectives and Outcomes

The vision, key themes, research and engagement informed a set of aims and objectives as well as a set of measurable outcomes for the Strategy to enable progress to be monitored and successes to be captured.

Strategy Objectives	
Ob1	To support the sustainable development, regeneration and growth of Sleaford, helping to attract inward investment and meeting current and future housing and business needs.
Ob2	To minimise carbon emissions from personal travel and freight transport.

Ob3	To improve the sustainability and connectivity of the communities of Sleaford and the surrounding area by improving access for all to employment, retail and services.
Ob4	To support and enhance sustainable travel and alternatives to the private car through widening choice, improving public transport and increasing provision for cycling and walking.
Ob5	To protect and enhance the quality and attractiveness of the built and natural environment of Sleaford and the surrounding area.
Ob6	To provide an efficient, convenient and accessible transport network for all, reducing the adverse impacts of travel, particularly from private cars and road-based freight.
Ob7	To improve the safety and security of all travel and, in particular, reducing the number and severity of road casualties.
Ob8	To improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents, employees and visitors, including through the reduction of noise and air quality related issues.
Ob9	To promote safe and non-car based travel to schools.
Ob10	To deliver a shift in modes of travel used away from the private car.

Strategy Outcomes	
Ou1	A reduction in carbon emissions from transport.
Ou2	A reduction in the use of the private car for accessing jobs, schools and the town centre, as a proportion of these journeys.
Ou3	A reduction in the amount of traffic entering the town centre core.
Ou4	An increase in the level of service provided by public transport between Sleaford and Lincoln, Grantham, Spalding and Boston.
Ou5	An increase in the proportion of the population living within 400 metres of a bus stop providing a minimum frequency of one bus service per hour.
Ou6	An increase in public transport patronage.
Ou7	An improvement in the reliability of bus services.
Ou8	An increase in the share of cycling and walking trips taken into the town centre.

Ou9	A reduction in both the number and severity of road accident casualties.
Ou10	A reduction in the number of accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians.
Ou11	An improvement in the perception of safety and security while travelling.

Interventions

The Strategy highlights a number of interventions, broken down into short/medium term and long term timescales. The short term options cover the first two years of the strategy while the medium term is between two and ten years. The longer term then goes beyond ten years.

The interventions are separated into four key areas:

- Public transport;
- Active travel;
- Smarter travel;
- Highways.

The public transport, active travel and highways interventions are all related to the delivery of infrastructure related while the smarter travel interventions are focused on the promotion, encouragement and facilitation of sustainable travel modes.

Traffic Modelling

A new traffic model for Sleaford was developed in 2013 to support the assessment of the transport implications of new developments and the formulation of the Sleaford Transport Strategy. The model has been developed using the industry standard SATURN software and covers both the AM and PM peak periods. The model covers in detail the whole of the Sleaford urban area and the immediately surrounding primary road network, including the A15 and A17. The model is a substantial improvement on the previous model which only covered the PM peak period and did not include the A15 and A17.

The robustness of the model (validation) has been tested using industry standard criteria and the model performs very well. During the validation process, the modelled traffic flows and journey times are compared to actual traffic flows and journey times that have been observed and recorded on the network. The traffic flow comparisons between those modelled and those observed show that traffic flow criteria are met in all periods. The journey time validation process showed that the differences between modelled and observed journey times were within 15% or 1 minute, if higher, for the vast majority of routes.

On the above basis, it has been demonstrated that the base year traffic model provides an accurate representation of the current traffic demands in the wider

Sleaford area, and is considered to be fit for purpose. It is a robust model, and therefore provides a reliable basis for assessing the future traffic impacts.

South East Sleaford Regeneration Route (SESRR)

The above scheme, which links Mareham Lane to Boston Road was granted planning permission in September 2013. Good progress is being made on the preparation and publication of Orders to acquire the land required for the scheme and to modify the existing highway network where it meets the scheme. Should sufficient objections be received following publication of Orders it is likely that a Public Inquiry will be held in early 2015. The scheme is developer funded.

Given the planning status and progress of the SESRR the Strategy classes it as a scheme that is already committed for delivery. It does not therefore feature in the list of interventions and has not been tested as an option in the traffic modelling work, although it is included in the base traffic flows.

2. Conclusion

The endorsement of the Sleaford Transport Strategy will assist Sleaford to be an example of sustainable growth, economic prosperity, low carbon emissions and safe, healthy and happy communities. Given the growth aspirations for the town it will provide a strong evidence base for future funding decisions on how people travel in and around Sleaford.

3. Legal Comments:

4. Resource Comments:

5. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

No

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

n/a

c) Scrutiny Comments

d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Draft Sleaford Transport Strategy

7. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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