

Draft Joint Local Transport Plan

Consultation Responses

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Question One – Do you support the Objectives of the draft Local Transport Plan?

Fine words, who could disagree with this “apple pie” collection of largely updated intentions first seen around forty years ago in the Transport Policies and Programmes, Structure Plans, Local Plans and ever since in various policies and strategies that have mostly rested on shelves in departments.

However, in response to your question whether we support your considerable efforts the answer is of course yes but qualified in that it is lacking in positive intervention and alone will make little difference, perpetuating current shortcomings.

Question Two – Do you support the Long Term Strategy of the draft Local Transport Plan?

As above

All things to all people and will not make a difference

Question Three – Do you support the policies set out in the draft Local Transport Plan?

As above

Table One - Policy links - pointless

Table Two - Linkages - states the obvious

Table Three - Transformational Connectivity - All need a cycling/walking links

Question Four – Do you agree with the potential projects (to achieve the Plan objectives) set out in the programmes of the draft Local Transport Plan?

It is good to see the long list of cycle/walking projects (as yet unprioritised...) that mostly have been sought after for many years. They will not be delivered unless real priority is given to their preparation and delivery, using all the statutory powers available including preparation of a compulsory purchase order if negotiation fails after a period of two years, to concentrate minds.. The Planning Inspectorate will need some training in regard to cycling projects, largely outside their experience.

We would like to see real action in promoting provision in all development which should have a statement on provision as part of the application process. We would also like to see all former railway routes protected for possible future SUP until such time as they are evaluated to be of no future interest. Trunk Road development should also provide for cycling and walking where no satisfactory route exists and its design minimise severance and provide for safe access at junctions

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We have not had time to check on the state of the schemes listed or consult with the counties on some details in the few days we have had, considerably less than the inadequate 21 days given. This is a result of the delayed receipt of your email, so apologies in advance for any errors. We would not expect this list to include schemes already under way such as the Cross Hands Economic Link Road, or already committed to start.

All new roads should have SUP provision and be properly designed as cycle/pedestrian routes unless there is a suitable alternative very close by. This is currently far from reality.

General Comments

Public Transport

Adequate carriage of cycles on trains should be a requirement of the franchising process together with safe provision for cycle parking at all stations. The provision of cycle racks on buses seems to have faltered despite its use in other countries, this needs to be further investigated..

Good cycle access to railway stations should be a priority in all urban plans.

Traffic Management

All schemes should include adequate provision for cycling, especially in urban areas. This includes false one way or contraflow on quieter one way roads and also provide openings for cyclists on road closures. We welcome 20mph zones which should be enforced.

Many new road crossings have become major obstacles to walking/cycling because of their complexity... there should be a solution out there.

Road Schemes

I have no particular comments except to say they should always include cycling and walking provision and not cause severance, particularly in urban areas I expect others will lend support to the schemes.

No details yet of some tables and appendices, e.g. Table 8 Future Programme.

How has the schedule been decided for the next five years already when many details are scant to say the least? It seems wildly optimistic bearing in mind what has been achieved in the last five years.

Cycling and Walking

Note - Projects in the programme not referred to below are welcomed inclusions. These comments are additional

Active Travel

Bearing in mind the timescale and work this entails, from preparation of maps, consultation, appraisal and preparation, will this provision include only preparation costs of the plans or include a start on schemes?

Table Three Transformation Connectivity - Swansea Bay City Region .

Fabian Way Corridor

This should include good direct cycle/walking connection for the University Campus with the city centre via Prince of Wales Dock .

Cross Hands Economic Link Road

Elsewhere is stated the need for a cycle route from Penygroes to Cross Hands. This link could possibly be part of it if it includes SU and is convenient with its connections.. I see it is already under construction so why is it in the post 2015 list causing confusion.

Blackbridge Scheme

This should include a SUP

Table Four City and County of Swansea Schemes 2010 –2020

City Centre Cycle Network

Second Tawe Bridge to The Strand as a direct link to the City Centre

Kingsway Public Transport Initiative

Surely no more disruption. Cycle use possible by the more experienced but Kingsway/Westway is not a safe environment for many cyclists

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Kingsbridge Cycle Route This originally intended a link from the NCN 4 at the Commercial car park with a bridge over the railway using the existing abutments. This would be preferable to having to use the existing station footbridge (newly constructed).

Walking and Cycling Links to NCN

The areas of Swansea to the north and west need connection to the network, having been largely ignored in the past.

Walking and Cycling Links to School

A SUP in the verge between Bishopston and Mayals Road on Gower would provide a much needed route for all trip purposes (especially the schools) on this busy and dangerous section of B4436. The verges have largely been destroyed by drainage grips which together with overhanging trees prevent use as they are.

North Gower Trail

As well as this section a route is needed through Penclawdd linking with the section at Crofty and the Marsh Road to Llanrhidian

All Gowerton Bypass junctions present real hazards to cyclists and should be reviewed

Active Travel

No provision whereas other counties have. Why not?

Park and Ride

All sites should provide cycle parking and free transport to the City Centre.

Investigate Light Rail

Enough is enough, the part time Metro buses are not justified in our opinion, especially as they do not serve evening visiting or connect with Mumbles.

Table Five Neath Port Talbot County Borough Schemes 2015-2020

Coed D'Arcy Southern Link road

As well as the cycle connection proposed to Fabian Way, there is the northern connection from Coed D'Arcy to Swansea Enterprise Zone needed just two miles away along the Crymlyn Road corridor. This road is busy, narrow with sharp bends and steep gradients in places and will get much busier as the D'Arcy development takes place. A SUP route skirting Cymlyn Bog would provide excellent connection and be a useful addition to the network.

Tennant Canal

This route connects Swansea East and Coed D'Arcy with Skewen and Neath linking with the Neath Valley and Briton ferry routes as well. It would provide excellent local connection and a fantastic recreational and tourism facility

Amman Valley Cycleway

The completion of this route needs connection from Cwmllynfell to Ystalyfera via Cwmtwrch (Uchaf and Isaf). The route could impinge on Powys as well.

GCG to Pontardawe

A link along the former railway and below from GCG to Pontardawe via Cwmgors would provide an excellent addition to the national network for all trip purposes. It would require route development as the former railway ends at Abernant Colliery site, but was intended to continue.

Table Six Pembrokeshire County Council Schemes 2015 – 2020

A very inclusive list of cycling/walking projects, very little to add.

We would like to see cycling provision along the A **** connecting the route Dale peninsular to Milford Haven.

The reopening for cycling of Pincheston quarry Lane via the bat tunnel at Sageston Bypass forms a useful link for cycling across the peninsular.

Haverfordwest to Narberth Cycle route

This has great potential but was intended to continue into Carmarthenshire to St Clears as the central route proposed in the West Wales Cycle Study of 1998, largely on quiet roads. Red Roses Bypass may have affected it.

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Table Seven Carmarthenshire County Council Schemes 2015 – 2020

Carmarthen West Link Road

Include SUP

Ammanford Distributor Road Phase 2

Include SUP

A4138 Access to Llanelli

Include SUP

Access to Pembrey Country Park

Include SUP

New Proposals

Ammanford to Cross Hands Route

This connection is considered vital in the network. It would include Penygroes, the major housing development at the brickworks and Gorslas and might possibly use part of the Black Lion Road to Cross Hands Link. The Ammanford Distributor Road Stage 2 could provide a route to Tycroes and via Capel Hendre link with Penygroes and via Fforest link with Pontarddulais.

Narberth to St Clears

Continuation of the Haverfordwest to Narberth route as expressed in the West Wales Cycle Study referred to earlier.

Question Five – Do you think the monitoring and evaluation proposals set out in the draft Local Transport Plan are the right ones?

The extreme monitoring / evaluation measures, especially wider outcomes, are in our view of very little practical use and some of it a waste of scarce resources. Some of the measures proposed are current practice in any event. Why state the glaringly obvious in many comments.

Question Six – Are there any other comments you would like to contribute about the draft Local Transport Plan?

This response form is in my view skewed to obtain a satisfactory result and it would give a more realistic result if a Trip Advisor type rating approach of 5* "strongly agree" down to 1* "pie in the sky" were used.

Whilst we are pleased to see attention given to cycling and walking, the most sustainable of transport modes, we would like to see the LTP encourage the development of a cycling culture but do not see this consequence as it stands.

It is said to have been prepared according to Assembly guidance regarding content and format (which we have not seen) but I doubt this document, with its ethereal Vision, Objectives, Policy, Strategy and Monitoring approach, will be effective in our real world of constraints of time, resources and finance. We regard most of it as of little connection with the job in hand, which is to assemble a programme of beneficial projects, prioritise and deliver them.

We agree some framework and methodology for developing and assessing priorities and allocating funding is necessary and even some monitoring over and above the usual counting, but this mass of linkages, charts and meaningless outcomes is really disappointing to see perpetuated.

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It is not always easy to compare and prioritise when dealing with similar projects and when dealing across the board it is nigh impossible, so you will doubtless allocate a share of the money available between counties and categories in the end. We think these LTP criteria are likely to slow down scheme development rather than assist it.

We would be pleased to see your method of assessment and how it relates to these very high minded objectives and policies and how it has been done, bearing in mind many projects are scant in the detail available so far. .

In the case of walking and cycling (if you do not get run over), the benefits to health and well being are huge. Can you not instil in this document some kind of enthusiasm for what you intend doing especially regarding the benefits. We want to see a cycling culture develop which requires a huge increase in safety consideration for cyclists and much more protection out there and in the legal responsibility of motorists. Without this the hugely optimistic target of 20% of trips from less than 2% by 2020 in the Active Travel proposal hasn't a hope. Can you factor this into your priorities and allocations over the next five years.

Regarding the medium and alone long term results, it would be interesting to see this list, its timing and cost. We have heard of a yardstick of £10 per head per annum is needed for cycling rather than the current UK figure of around £2 excluding, of course, that provision included in road schemes, which should be done as a matter of course.

Finally, whilst Wheelrights are sympathetic with the difficulty you face to find agreement across the board for a programme and its priority and appreciate being consulted, there is a certain impatience in our response and no small feeling of déjà vu in much of this report.

We want to see these projects realised not just kicked about.

Proper maintenance of the routes is clearly as important for walkers and especially cyclists as for cars on carriageways, so we would request that provision is made for the new projects as well as existing routes which will come under the responsibility of the authorities as a consequence of the Active Travel Act.

The list of Consultees provided does not include the CTC or Sustrans which is surprising, if true, as they represent at least some of the national cycling interest.

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