



York Civic Trust

Invited review of LTP3 April 2021

At the LTP4 Coordinating Group meeting on 15th January, officers invited us to review LTP3 and offer recommendation for the scope of LTP4. Our recommendations are set out below, and explained in the subsequent report.

Scope

Timeframe LTP4 should adopt a 15-year timeframe, with proposals in detail for 2022-7 and in outline for 2022 -42, but should also consider in outline longer term developments and aspirations. We suggest that it should set targets for 2027, when the outer ring road upgrade, York Central access and station upgrade should be complete, and for 2037, by which time most of the developments envisaged in the draft Local Plan should be complete.

Spatial coverage LTP4 should be expanded to consider the major developments underway outside York, including Green Hammerton, Pocklington and Escrick, all of which may result in additional commuting into the city.

Sectoral coverage LTP4 should be developed to complement and reflect policies for land use, communications, the urban economy and carbon reduction. This will require an iterative approach, since transport can contribute to all of these policy sectors, and each will itself have an impact on transport. The draft Local Plan should be modified to associate it with the version of the LTP which is current at the times that specific development decisions are taken rather than, as in the current draft, linking them to LTP3.

Coverage of transport modes and measures LTP4 needs to address the role of new technologies, such as connected and autonomous vehicles, very light rail, ride-sourcing (such as Uber), demand-responsive micro-transit and e-bikes and e-scooters. It also needs to consider freight, which was largely missing from LTP3, and we recommend the establishment of a Freight Forum to assist the Council in this.

Coverage of different groups of user LTP4 should directly address the needs of children and young people, adults in different socio-economic groups, those with disabilities and the elderly. It should also consider the specific needs of visitors. It should be structured to consider separately the needs of the city centre, inner city, outer York within the outer ring road, the out of town centres, villages and new developments.

Vision

LTP4 should be grounded in a vision for the city which attracts widespread support. We have offered a first draft based on the views of our Citizens' Transport Forum.

Objectives

In developing LTP4, a clear and measurable set of objectives should be specified at the outset, so that there is a clear justification for the strategy and measures, particularly where those measures might prove controversial. Again, we have offered a first draft based on the views of our Citizens' Transport Forum.

Trends, monitoring and problems

The Council should ensure, for LTP4, that it has at least one suitable outcome indicator for each of its objectives, as well as indicators reflecting flows and modal shares. It should retain such information in a central, publicly accessible database, and appoint a member of staff to be responsible for reviewing the data and alerting the Council when trends deviate from the desired profile. We have offered our own suggestions for such indicators. Provided that these arrangements are in place, the Council will be able to benefit from, and react to, an up to date record of the scale of problems to be addressed.

Targets

As noted above, we recommend that targets are set for 2027 and 2037. Targets should be set for each outcome indicator, and be challenging but achievable, and mutually consistent.

Strategy

The strategy for LTP4 should be developed in a holistic way for each of the individual modes, including freight. It needs to be comprehensive in its coverage of users and of areas of the city, and to adopt a holistic approach to providing for all of those needs.

Measures and implementation plans

We have not made specific recommendations on the measures to be included, though we have reviewed them in our strategy proposals. We recommend that, in addition to its LCWIP and BSIP, the Council produces implementation plans for planning and communication measures which influence travel, behavioural measures, traffic and parking management, and freight.

Barriers

In developing LTP4, it will be helpful to understand the likely range of funding available, and also discuss the potential for revenue generation from pricing measures. We also suggest that the Plan addresses political and public acceptability, and governance and skills.

Consultation

We have not reviewed the consultation process for LTP3, but anticipate that a more extensive approach will be adopted for engagement on LTP4.

Option appraisal

We plan to review the appraisal process for LTP3 as part of our forthcoming advice.

Invited review of LTP3

April 2021

At the LTP4 Coordinating Group meeting on 15th January, officers invited us to review LTP3 in terms of scope, objectives, strategy, measures implemented, action needed on measures which had yet to be implemented and new aspects which might need to be considered for LTP4. We report on each of these, and have also commented on treatment of the overall vision, the choice of indicators, the identification of problems, the setting of targets, implementation plans, the consideration of barriers to implementation, and the specific issues of engagement and option appraisal.

Scope of LTP3

Timeframe LTP3 covered 2011-15 in detail, 2016-21 as the medium term, and 2021-31 as long term. We recommend that LTP4 should adopt a similar timeframe, with proposals for 2022-7 and for 2022 -42, but should also consider in outline longer term developments and aspirations. We suggest that it should set targets for 2027, when the outer ring road upgrade, the new York Central access road and the improvements to the station front should be complete, thus offering opportunities for significant change within the city, and 2037, by which time most of the developments envisaged in the draft Local Plan should be complete. We are proposing targets for each of these dates in our strategy papers. The series of major enhancements anticipated by 2027 will provide a mandate for significant changes to ensure that the city benefits fully from them. We see this as the principal focus for the initial five year time period of LTP4. It may be that in the light of experience in benefiting from these enhancements it will be appropriate to develop a further new Local Transport Plan, LTP5, which might then cover the period 2027-47.

Spatial coverage LTP3 covered the whole of the administrative area, while looking briefly at regional requirements. We recommend that LTP4 should be expanded to consider the major developments underway outside York, including Green Hammerton, Pocklington and Escrick, all of which may result in additional commuting into the city.

Sectoral coverage LTP3 focused on transport, while referring to other strategies, and particularly land use planning under the then Local Development Framework. Land use policy is addressed on pp11-13 and 32, but has been superseded by the draft Local Plan. LTP3 did not cover the role of communications, which have emerged since as an important alternative to travel, particularly with the growth in working from home and online shopping. Neither did it give much consideration to the needs of the urban economy, or of reducing impacts on climate change, both of which are now central to Council policy. We recommend that LTP4 be developed to complement and reflect policies in all of these areas. This will require an iterative approach, since transport can contribute to all of these policy sectors, and each will itself have an impact on transport.

A particular issue arises in relation to the draft Local Plan, which specifically cites LTP3 as its basis for transport matters. This clearly will no longer be appropriate once LTP4 is complete, and we recommend that, when the opportunity arises, the draft Local Plan is modified to associate it with the version of the LTP which is current at the times that specific development decisions are taken. We envisage that the preparation of LTP4 will highlight

opportunities to change planning policy to benefit from new transport opportunities and to reduce adverse impacts on the transport network. We recommend that these are reflected either, if time permits, in specific revisions to the draft Local Plan, or in a supplementary planning document.

Coverage of transport modes and measures LTP3 inevitably did not consider technological advances in the last decade, but it also says very little about the needs of freight. LTP4 clearly needs to address the role of new technologies, such as connected and autonomous vehicles, very light rail, ride-sourcing (such as Uber), demand-responsive micro-transit and what the International Transport Forum refers to as micromobility: e-bikes and e-scooters, both shared and privately owned. We have considered all of these in our first six modal strategy papers.

The lack of consideration of freight is a major omission, and is not helped by the lack of specialist expertise available to the Council. We have advocated the establishment of a Freight Forum, to work with industry bodies and providers and users of logistics services, and have identified an expert who has led freight forums in Sheffield and Manchester, who is willing to act as facilitator. The Council's recent success in obtaining funding from DEFRA will provide momentum to this proposal, but it is important to stress that freight within the city centre is only one aspect of a future freight strategy. Assuming that a Freight Forum can be established in time, we will be providing our proposals for a freight strategy for the Coordinating Group's July meeting. Any delay beyond that would make it difficult for LTP4 to reflect freight-related policies in an integrated way.

Coverage of different groups of user LTP3 says relatively little about the needs of different sectors of society or of visitors, or the differing requirements in different areas of the city. In particular, it makes virtually no mention of those who are disabled. We recommend that LTP4 should directly address the needs of children and young people, adults in different socio-economic groups, those with disabilities and the elderly. It should also consider the specific needs of visitors. We have developed a checklist in preparing our six strategy papers, and have made recommendations for different user groups where the need arises.

Spatially, there is a tendency to focus on the city centre and its immediate surroundings, and for those in outer York to feel that their needs are overlooked. In our six strategy papers, we have considered separately the needs of the city centre, inner city, outer York within the outer ring road, the out of town centres, villages and new developments, and we recommend that LTP4 be structured in this way.

Vision

LTP3 (p10) quotes the vision for the city from *York- A City Making History: Vision and Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2025*, and lists seven strategic ambitions designed to help deliver it (p11). We recommend that the Council review this vision at an early stage, to provide an appropriate context for decisions on LTP4. As a contribution to this, the Citizens' Transport Forum (CTF) proposed the following vision, which we included in our paper *Towards a Transport Strategy for York*: "Our vision is of a city which respects its environment while enhancing quality of life, social justice and economic vitality." We also

suggest that the Council might, as part of its vision, consider promoting one or more of the emerging sustainable transport technologies such as hydrogen and fuel cell propulsion or (very) light rail.

Objectives

A clearly specified set of objectives provides a basis for identifying and justifying the Plan's strategy and specific measures, and for assessing performance as the Plan is implemented. LTP3 is in practice largely silent on the objectives for which it was designed. The only mention is on p29, which presents the "vision for transport" as being:

1. to enable everyone to undertake their activities in the most sustainable way
2. to have a transport system that:
 - a. has people walking, cycling and using public transport more
 - b. makes York easier to get around with reliable and sustainable links within its own area, and to adjacent areas and cities and the rest of the UK
 - c. enables people to travel in safety, comfort and security, whatever form of transport they use
 - d. provides equal access to opportunities for employment, education, training, good health and leisure for all
 - e. addresses the transport-related climate change and local air quality issues in York.

Of these, 2a is in practice part of the strategy for achieving the others. The remainder are objectives, but are not subsequently quantified or used in justifying the content of the Plan. We recommend that, for LTP4, a clear and measurable set of objectives is specified at the outset, so that there is a clear justification for the strategy and measures, particularly where those measures might prove controversial. Based on the Forum's discussions, we proposed our own in our *Towards a Transport Strategy for York*:

"In achieving our vision as outlined above, the new Local Transport Plan should be designed to meet several interconnected objectives for the city. Of these, as the Forum stressed in its March 2020 report, the most important are ensuring that the transport system is efficient, generates substantially less pollution and results in far lower levels of carbon emissions.

"At the same time, the Plan must be designed to achieve the objectives of ensuring safety, supporting public health, increasing equality of access, enhancing liveability, and protecting public space and heritage. A Plan which successfully addresses all of these will also help to strengthen the sustainability and economy of the city.

"In its December meeting, the Forum confirmed that these goals are central to any new Local Transport Plan. It concluded that the priorities should remain as listed, while giving greater emphasis to public health, safety and regeneration of the city's economy, given the impacts of the pandemic on the retail and hospitality sectors. In support of these, York needs to assess what mix of economic activities will best sustain the vibrancy of its city centre."

We recommend that councillors, at the Coordinating Group meeting, consider whether this statement forms an acceptable basis for the Council in defining its objectives.

Trends and monitoring

Trends prior to 2011 are set out in some detail on pp18-28 of LTP3, together with some projections in the light of anticipated growth. A detailed set of 32 monitoring indicators is listed on pp59-66. These can be categorised as follows:

- 16 are outcome indicators, measuring achievement against objectives
- eight are intermediate outcome indicators, measuring changes in travel
- eight are output indicators, recording measures implemented or adopted.

Of these, professional guidance suggests that the outcome indicators are of most value, since they measure achievement. The intermediate indicators are of help in understanding how the outcome indicators are being influenced. The output indicators are of less benefit in assessing performance, but do assist in tracking delivery.

There was to have been a first review of LTP3 against these 32 indicators in 2015, but we have been advised that this did not take place. It has taken some time for us to receive the data which the Council currently has on these indicators, and it appears that they are not retained in a central database or regularly reviewed. Six of the outcome indicators are no longer monitored, meaning that the Council has no current information on trends in congestion or accessibility. There also appears to be no up to date information on modal shares. We recommend that the Council ensures that it has at least one suitable outcome indicator for each of its objectives, as well as indicators reflecting flows and modal shares. It should retain such information in a central, publicly accessible database, and appoint a member of staff to be responsible for reviewing the data and alerting the Council when trends deviate from the desired profile.

For LTP4, we propose the following outcome indicators, each of which can be disaggregated as appropriate by area of the city, time of day and category of mode and user:

- carbon emissions from transport (not currently available)
- oxides of nitrogen (in LTP3 as LI 14)
- levels of congestion (no longer measured nationally or locally; we need an indicator which is easier to understand and better reflects the problems)
- casualties (in LTP3 as NI47 and LI13)
- accessibility by bus and active travel by area of the city (only partially covered in LTP3 by NI176 and LI9; we have proposed using the Public Transport Accessibility Levels approach developed in London)
- actual and perceived safety and quality for cycling and walking (not currently available).

We also propose a set of intermediate outcome indicators covering modal shares and flows for each mode.

Problems

Problems experienced in 2011 are addressed in LTP3 on pp7-9, 15-17. The Forum discussed problems in some detail, but noted that it was difficult to assess their severity given lack of information. This is obviously linked to what we say above on monitoring. We commented as follows in *Towards a Transport Strategy for York*:

“As the Forum’s report of March 2020 notes, congestion, air pollution and the impact of transport on climate change are all serious problems for York. The new Local Transport Plan needs to be designed to achieve significant reductions in all three problems, whilst ensuring

socially equitable access and economic vitality. The Plan also needs to address several other problems, of which the most serious are transport's impact on mental and physical health; danger from traffic; intrusion of vehicles into public space and poor levels of access for some sectors of the population and business."

Subject to having available data, we are summarising current problems in our six strategy papers.

Targets

LTP3 sets a target for each of the 32 indicators for 2014/15 but as noted there has been no appraisal against them. No targets are set for longer term outcomes. There is a set of key outcomes listed on piv, but none is quantified, and most are outputs rather than outcomes or intermediate outcomes. We recommend that targets are set for each outcome indicator, and that they are challenging but achievable, and mutually consistent. As indicated above, we are proposing a set of targets for 2027 and 2037 in our modal strategy reports. These should form the basis for developing the strategy, but need to be reconsidered once the strategy is formulated to ensure that they are consistent with it and with one another.

Strategy

LTP3 proposes a strategy, on p32, with five themes:

1. provide quality alternatives to the car
2. provide strategic links
3. implement behavioural change
4. tackle transport emissions
5. improve public streets and spaces.

We are not convinced that this breakdown is particularly helpful, since related measures are covered under several headings; for example there are measures related to walking in themes 1, 2,3 and 5.

We suggest instead that it might be clearer, for LTP4, to develop the strategy in a holistic way for each of the individual modes, including freight. In *Towards a Transport Strategy for York* we commented as follows:

"Since population growth is likely to exacerbate York's transport problems, the key elements of the strategy will be measures to enhance public transport, walking and cycling and, at the same time, to reduce car travel, especially in congested and sensitive areas of the City, and to reduce the need to travel longer distances, particularly through the design of sustainable communities. This combination of "carrots" and "sticks" will help make the strategy both more effective and more acceptable to the public and the business community. It should be reinforced by adopting a "hearts and minds" approach, in which incentives are designed to encourage users to change their travel habits, and to respect the needs of others.

"To reinforce this core strategy, action is needed to improve the operation of the road network, by reallocating road space and using it more efficiently, and to improve freight and delivery operations.

“The strategy needs to be developed in compatible ways in five broad geographical areas: the historic centre; the inner suburbs; the outer suburbs within the Outer Ring Road; the city’s villages; and (with adjacent authorities) the communities within York’s catchment area. It also needs to consider separately the needs of residents, commuters, visitors and businesses.”

This last paragraph is, we suggest, particularly important. There is an understandable tendency for those in outer York to think that all of the focus is on the city centre, and for those with particular needs, whether they are disabled or in low income households, to consider that their needs are overlooked. The strategy for LTP4 needs to be comprehensive in its coverage of users and of areas of the city, and to adopt a holistic approach to providing for all of those needs. We are preparing our modal strategy papers in this context.

Measures

The specific measures proposed in LTP3 are listed by theme and by time horizon on pp34-50. Officers have provided us with a spreadsheet which indicates that of the roundly 100 measures, some 20% had been completed, 40% were progressing on schedule, 25% were in hand but behind schedule, and 15% had not yet been started. Care is needed, of course, in interpreting these figures, since the measures vary greatly in scale and complexity.

We have also been asked which measures not proposed in LTP3, or not actually implemented as a result of LTP3, should be considered in LTP4. We suggest that it will be better to reach agreement on the vision, objectives and strategy for LTP4 before providing a final list of appropriate measures. But in the meantime, each of our modal strategy papers suggests what might be done, and we have made a point of considering those measures which were not available a decade ago.

Implementation plans

Unlike previous LTPs, there was no requirement with LTP3 to produce implementation plans for each mode, and the lack of such plans appears to have led to some uncertainty as to what was envisaged and when. There is now an urgent need for such plans for walking and cycling, in the form of an Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), and for buses, through a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). We recommend that, in addition to these, the Council produces implementation plans for planning and communication measures which influence travel, behavioural measures, traffic and parking management, and freight.

Barriers

In preparing the Plan it is helpful to be clear on the barriers to implementation, and on ways of overcoming them. Barriers typically addressed include acceptability, governance, finance and skills. Of these, LTP3 only considers finance, which is covered on pp 51-58. We recommend that, for LTP4, it will be helpful to understand the likely range of funding available, and also to discuss the potential for revenue generation from pricing measures. We also suggest that the Plan addresses political and public acceptability, and governance considerations (such as private sector operation of public transport).

Consultation

Effective consultation and engagement will help address the barriers of political, business and public acceptability. In LTP3 there is a description of the three stages of consultation conducted, on pp6,7. We understand that the response to the business engagement was disappointing, and that there was no public consultation on the final draft Plan prior to approval. We suggest that it might be helpful to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the approach adopted.

For LTP4, we are in discussion with Claire Foale and her colleagues, and have contributed to the Council's public engagement plans. In particular we have discussed the opportunities for involving, and ideally strengthening, our Citizens' Transport Forum, which has already demonstrated its ability to achieve consensus on sensitive aspects of transport strategy.

Option appraisal We have been invited by the Council to suggest a procedure by which it might determine priorities for the Implementation Plan associated with LTP4. LTP3 includes a description of the option appraisal approach on p32, and we propose to review that in developing our proposals.