

Local Development Framework Briefing Paper LTP Infrastructure and Access Issues: Exeter Area



Devon County Council's advice to Local Planning Authorities.

This is one of a series of briefing papers prepared by Devon County Council to assist the preparation of Local Development Documents. To view this, and other briefing papers, see <http://www.devon.gov.uk/ldf-briefing-papers> For more information or comment contact 01392 382275 or email environment@devon.gov.uk

Local Planning Authorities are requested to take the following matters into account in preparing their Local Development Frameworks and other documents:

1. **Key Principles to be addressed (see Section 2A)**
 - a) **Support for targets set out in the LTP and set out how the LDF will help meet these targets;**
 - b) **Support and enable highway improvements and new links identified in the strategy;**
 - c) **Secure developer contributions to support LTP investment;**
 - d) **Include policies to ensure developments support high quality walking and cycling routes and public transport services;**
 - e) **Support the Park & Ride policy;**
 - f) **Support the emerging demand management strategy;**
 - g) **Protect disused transport infrastructure**

2. **Specific Issues and Key Schemes for Exeter (see Section 2B)**
 - i) **Major Scheme Bids for East of Exeter and Exeter Principal Urban Area**
 - ii) **Transport Innovation Fund & Demand Management**
 - iii) **Congestion Action Plan**
 - iv) **Highway Management**
 - v) **Bus Priority**
 - vi) **New Developments**
 - vii) **Air Quality**
 - viii) **Local Area Enhancements**
 - ix) **Cycling Demonstration Town**
 - x) **Park & Ride**
 - xi) **Interchanges**
 - xii) **Travel Plans**

Partnership Working

Devon County Council wishes to work in partnership with District Councils, in further developing the above policy areas with colleagues and other organisations and would wish to be fully involved in any discussion relating to them.

1. Introduction

The County Council as the Transport Authority for Devon is responsible for the preparation of the Local Transport Plan [LTP] 2006-2011. This briefing paper sets out LTP matters relating to the transport strategy for Exeter which the County Council requests Exeter City Council, Teignbridge District Council, East Devon District Council and Mid Devon District Council to address in the preparation of its Local Development Framework [LDF].

This paper should be read in conjunction with associated papers covering the Local Transport Plan, and countywide issues including Development Control and Travel Plans. It will concentrate on matters specific to Exeter and to the surrounding areas where relevant and should not be seen as exhaustive. Detailed issues will be discussed and clarified directly with officers as necessary.

2. DCC Policy Guidance – The Exeter Transport Strategy

The Local Development Framework (LDF) should address the following issues related to the Exeter Transport strategy.

A. *Key Principles to be addressed*

The Devon Local Transport Plan 2006 – 11 (LTP) sets out the transport strategy for Exeter.

- To provide high quality, more frequent and reliable local bus and rail journeys
- Provide better facilities to encourage an increase in walking and cycling
- Implement measures to tackle traffic congestion and improve air quality
- Improve journey time reliability through key road improvements and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)
- Implement demand management measures to control parking and highway capacity
- Promote smarter travel choices and the implementation of school and employer travel plans

The strategy will be subject to more detailed development with regard to the impact of LDF options. The County Council will work alongside the District Councils in the assessment of options and the transport impacts.

A number of targets have been developed for the Devon LTP, most of which are applicable to Exeter. The Sub Regional Programme for Exeter contains a number of targets relating to issues including walking, cycling, public transport, congestion and travel to school. It is important that the land use strategy set out in the LDF complements, and does not work against, the Local Transport Plan and the Exeter Strategy. LDF's should set out how they will help to meet LTP targets and other measures.

The strategy as it develops will require the implementation of specific highway improvements, enhancements or new routes in order to meet the overall objectives. It is important that the land use strategy takes into account the future planning of the highway network.

Developer contributions support LTP investment. Highway contributions should be sought in a consistent way as set out in the LDF Briefing Paper - Development Control Highway Considerations. A system of tariffs based on the number of dwellings or square footage would be an appropriate means of achieving the necessary certainty and levels of funding. Further discussions would be required on the appropriate tariff levels and systems taking account potential changes in legislation.

Development Control policies should ensure that new developments support an integrated network of walking and cycling routes. Access to public transport services is essential to support sustainability and encourage modal shift. Bus stops should be within 400m of residents. The need to design out crime is acknowledged but must not be at the expense of the transport strategy.

The Park & Ride policy seeks the implementation of new sites around the city in the future. The purchase, development and access to suitable sites will be essential to support this policy.

As Highway Authority the County Council is managing the highway to make better use of the available capacity as well as encouraging modal shift. A key part of this is a joint approach with the City Council to implement a car parking strategy as part of a range of comprehensive demand management measures.

Future expansion of the sustainable transport network should not be frustrated by the release of existing land which may have transport related function in the future, although this may not be immediately apparent. This applies particularly to the development of transport interchanges

B Specific Issues and Key Schemes for Exeter

The emerging transport strategy for Exeter contains a number of key schemes. The LDF should incorporate and include proposals for the delivery and support of the following schemes.

i) Major Scheme Bids

The County Council is submitting two Major Scheme Bids to DfT for Regional Funding Allocation in the Exeter Area.

- a) East of Exeter – Cranbrook new community, Skypark, Science Park, Intermodal Freight Terminal.
- b) Exeter Principal Urban Area – Western Way, Exe Bridges, Alphington Road, Park & Ride west of the city, Bridge Road, Countess Wear, Topsham Road

The schemes are designed to maximise the benefits of the significant residential and business developments taking place now and emerging in the future in the Exeter area, particularly to the east of the city. Best use has been made of existing transport infrastructure but a point has been reached where little more capacity or flexibility can be utilised. The schemes will ensure that the highway network is capable of supporting these developments and support measures to ensure modal shift. This will ensure the economic vitality and productivity of city will be maintained in the future.

The East of Exeter Major Scheme bid focuses on significant improvements to Junctions 29 and 30 on the M5 to accommodate the increased traffic generated by the new developments. A key part of these developments is to promote sustainable travel and Junction 29 will include significant bus priority measures to maximise modal shift.

The Exeter Principal Urban Area Major Scheme bid includes providing additional highway capacity in the outbound direction as part of the Exeter Congestion Strategy. The identified corridors will include bus priority measures to encourage modal shift. A new Park & Ride facility in the vicinity of the A30 Ide junction to serve the west of the city is included in the overall package.

ii) Transport Innovation Fund & Demand Management

The Transport Innovation Fund has been created in response to the growing problems associated with congestion, particularly the impacts of congestion on the functioning of society and economy. The concept of wide ranging demand management measures coupled with a step change in public transport provision are the key features of this initiative.

The County Council, in conjunction with DfT, and with the support of stakeholders, is working towards a submission to DfT to take advantage of this potential funding source. This will support the Major Scheme Bids and help to address the challenges resulting from the new developments in and around the city.

The proposals include wide ranging demand management measures which build on the existing strategy

- car parking policy, jointly with the City Council
- implementation of the residents parking strategy,
- development of a Civil Parking Enforcement scheme
- transfer of road space to more sustainable transport
- investigations into the potential for introducing road pricing and private non residential charging
- softer measures (travel plans, Travelwise etc) to encourage travel restraint and more sustainable alternatives

The revenue generated through demand management measures developed in support of the TIF submission will not only support the operation and future development of the HQPT but will be used to enhance the remainder of the public transport network in the Exeter area and develop other sustainable transport measures such as cycling and walking.

The proposal seeks to deliver a High Quality Public Transport network on key routes to link the major new developments to residential and employment areas illustrated in **Figure 1**. The extensive priority, time advantage for key journeys and service image will attract a much wider range of user.

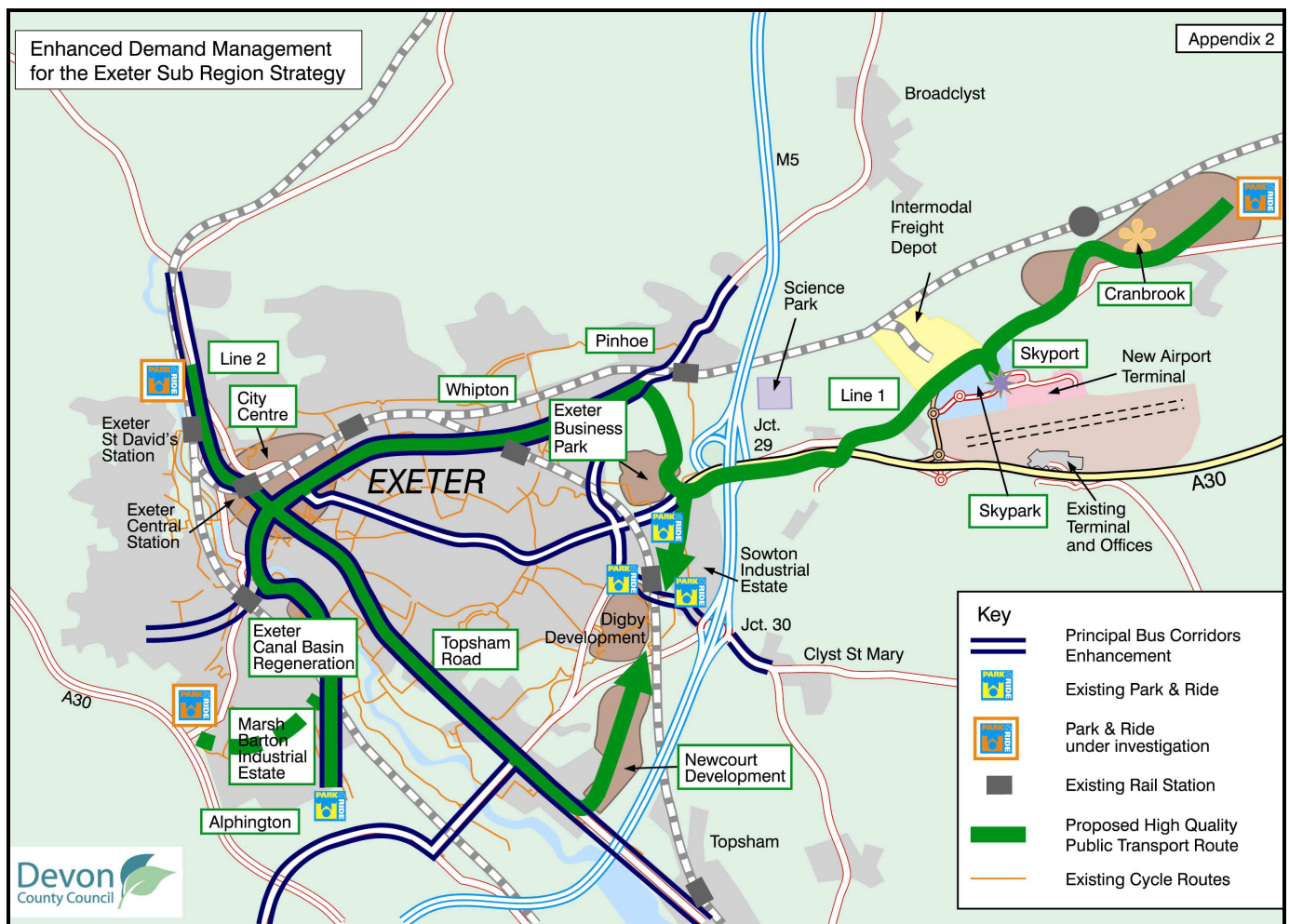


Figure 1: Transport Innovation Fund Submission Diagram

iii) Congestion Action Plan

In December 2003 the County Council agreed a twelve point Action Plan to combat congestion in Exeter as part of a Devon Congestion Strategy.

- Focusing network improvements on key routes
- Developing intelligent transport systems
- Deploying more travel plans in partnership with schools and employers
- Active management of the road network to keep traffic flowing
- Improving public transport facilities and supporting the improving bus services
- Continuing the development and improvement of facilities for safe cycling and walking
- Demand management through parking controls

To maximise the benefits of the strategy the key elements are integrated and co-ordinated in the Exeter Sub Regional LTP Programme.

iv) Highway Management

Managing the traffic on the highway is a key responsibility of the County Council as the highway authority. A Traffic Manager has been appointed to control activities on the highway network with the aim of minimising delays to the travelling public and improving the reliability of journey times, especially public transport, by improving planning and co-ordination of activities on the network.

- Co-ordinating activities – planned works and events on the highway to reduce conflicts
- Network monitoring – using new technology and making the best use of ITS to direct and control traffic in conjunction with the Police, Highways Agency and other local authorities
- Enforcement – monitoring and enforcement of activities on the highway

v) Bus Priority

Bus priority is a key element of the Exeter Congestion Action Plan. Buses are an efficient use of road space but traffic congestion and other constraints on the network cause variability in road journey times making it difficult for bus operators to schedule bus services that adhere to timetable on a regular basis. More attractive bus services are a key element in reducing reliance on the private car and ensuring modal shift to more sustainable modes.

In order to realize the required additional priority for buses it will be necessary to implement priority schemes on key bus routes which restrict private car use, parking and access. This includes measures such as

- Increased hours of operation of bus lanes
- Removing on street car parking
- Adjusting signal timing to give greater bus priority
- Revisions to Residents Car Parking Schemes

The Exeter Sub Regional LTP Programme support a programme of improvements which have been developed through the Exeter Bus Strategy and the work of Colin Buchanan and Peter Brett Associates commissioned by the County and City Councils.

vi) New Developments

A significant number of new developments both residential and business are proposed in the Exeter area in the future. As well as the major schemes to address the effects of these developments on the highway network, it is essential that the internal design and layout supports the concept of sustainable communities.

A key part of sustainability and encouraging modal shift are measures to support walking and cycling routes and ensuring that quality public transport services and facilities are implemented and an integral part of the overall design. Walking distance to public transport should be no more than 400m.

Key locations are

- **Cranbrook. New community east of Exeter** with planning permission for 2,900 homes. Structure Plan includes provision for 3,500 dwellings with the Regional Spatial Strategy projecting numbers beyond this. Provision included new rail station and High Quality Public Transport route linking the city and key employments areas
- **Skypark.** High quality prestigious business park on the north western side of Exeter airport on 40 hectares and generating some 7,000 jobs
- **Intermodal Freight Terminal.** Located to the east of Exeter on the Honiton to Waterloo rail line and with good access to the A30 to accommodate the transfer of goods between road and rail and transhipment for local distribution
- **Exeter City.** The Structure Plan anticipates an additional 3,000 dwellings and 4,000 jobs within the city by 2011 and a further 2,500 dwellings and 3,000 jobs by the end of the Structure Plan period (2016)

vii) Air Quality

Poor air quality can affect people's health. The Government has challenged local authorities under the Environment Act 1995 to assess and manage their air quality. A National Air Quality Strategy has been produced and national health based standards have been published to allow air quality to be assessed.

In Exeter there is a need to tackle emissions of nitrogen dioxide associated with motor vehicles. As a result Exeter City Council has designated Exeter as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The creation of this area enables policies and projects to be designed which will improve air quality.

A key part of the AQMA Action Plan is to tackle congestion and a number of measures are being implemented as part of the Exeter Sub Regional LTP Programme

- Improving specific corridors and junctions by improving traffic flow. Slow and idling engines produce the more harmful emissions
- Investment in new public transport vehicles with emissions meeting higher European standards
- Investing in bus priority to ensure buses, which can be significant contributors to harmful emissions, are subject to less delay

viii) Local Area Enhancements

One of the County Councils priorities is to improve the quality of the urban environment. The key principle is to improve the quality of public spaces, seeking to reinforce local distinctiveness and deliver a quality public realm. This includes the use of high quality materials, commissioning bespoke design and public art which respecting the legacy of the historic environment.

The County Council is working with the City Council, environmental professionals and specialists on a number of initiatives:

- Exeter High Street
- Princesshay Shopping Centre
- Cathedral Yard & Cathedral Green
- Heavitree Fore Street
- Other local centres

ix) Cycling Demonstration Town

Exeter is one of six Cycling Demonstration Towns chosen by Cycling England to test whether increased funding concentrated within a limited area can boost cycling levels over a short period of time. Part of the programme involves the creation of a safer and comprehensive network of cycle routes catering for both leisure and commuter cycling.

The project also focuses on ensuring cycling is a core element in the safer Journeys to School scheme and in the development of Travel Plans. The Exeter Sub Regional Programme includes schemes to support this project to build a comprehensive cycle network linking key locations in the city.

x) Park & Ride

Park & Ride is a key element of the Exeter Congestion Strategy and provides a fast and frequent alternative to the car for journeys to the city centre. A strategy to develop the existing Park & Ride network of services in the future has been developed. This includes

- **a new site to the west of the city** (as part of the Exeter PUA Major Schemes Bid)
- **a new site to the north of the city**
- **expansion/ relocation of existing sites to the east and south of the city**
- **park and ride as part of Travel Plans** including the existing RD&E Park and Ride site at Digby
- **improved infrastructure and facilities on site**

xi) Interchanges

Modal interchanges offer the ability to make complete journeys on public transport by changing vehicles or modes or can assist in reducing car travel by facilitating interchange with public transport for part of the journey. Issue to be addressed at specific locations

- **Exeter bus station** – (owned by ECC) passenger facilities, access for persons with disabilities, Real Time Information, bus priority, access for pedestrians & cyclists, cycle facilities, safety, development and relocation as part of overall redevelopment of city centre. Relocation of bus parking provision
- **Exeter St Davids and Exeter Central rail station forecourts** – (Network Rail leased to Train Operating Company), bus interchange, bus priority, access for persons with disabilities, Real Time Information, access for pedestrians & cyclists, cycle facilities, traffic circulation and access to highway, taxis, visual enhancements
- **Park & Ride sites** – (Local Authorities) – bus priority, passenger facilities, access for persons with disabilities, Real Time Information, lighting, safety, security, location. Park & Ride services play an important role in the Congestion Strategy reducing the number of car trips into the urban areas. Increasingly Park & Ride will become a feature of Employer Travel Plans.
- **Exeter Airport** – (Sold by DCC to a private company in Dec 2006) – Airport Surface Access Strategy, bus access, bus priority, passenger facilities, taxis

xii) Travel Plans

To encourage more sustainable travel the County Council is working in partnership with employers and schools to encourage the development and promotion of travel plans:

- **Existing and new employers** are developing Travel Plans with the County Council to encourage more sustainable journeys to work. Emphasis is on walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing.
- **All schools** in the Exeter have or are undertaking Safer Journeys to School programmes including cycling initiatives and walking buses
- **New developments** are being encouraged to promote personal travel plans as part of the sale of new homes, providing a travel pack and links to travel information to encourage modal shift away from the private car

Also see LDF Briefing Paper – Travel Plans