

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Norfolk County Council

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Technical Note on Transport Evidence (January 2023)

This Technical Note on Transport Evidence has been prepared by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk and Norfolk County Council as the Highways Authority to pull together the full suite of transport studies and strategies that support the Local Plan in accordance with the Inspectors' Specification for Technical Note on Transport Evidence [G14].

King's Lynn Transport Strategy

Introduction

1.1 The King's Lynn Transport Strategy was prepared between 2018 and 2019 and adopted in February 2020, pre-pandemic, by both the Highway Authority (HA), Norfolk County Council and the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. The strategy, and therefore Examination Documents [D24/30] reflect the pre-pandemic transport conditions.

1.2 Changes in national transport policy have occurred since then, for example the introduction of Gearchange and LTN 1/20, in part as a consequence of changes in travel patterns and also changes in mode choice during the Coronavirus pandemic. Also, further studies have been carried out and new documents adopted to supplement the King's Lynn Transport Strategy

1.3 These changes in travel patterns and transport policy have been reflected in ongoing work to develop transport solutions to support the strategy and its associated Implementation Plan.

1.4 In the meantime the overarching countywide Norfolk Fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) was adopted by Norfolk County Council in July 2022. This comprises both a strategy document and an implementation plan.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/roads-and-travel-policies/local-transport-plan>

1.5 It is recognised that the formal King's Lynn Transport Strategy document needs to catch up with these developments and further study work to complete this is programmed for 2023/24 subject to funding.

2.0 Summary

2.1 In summary, the transport strategy is set out in the King's Lynn Transport Strategy document. Since its adoption, further work has been completed on individual aspects, which set out further detail on specific parts of the strategy. These are described in the text below.

2.2 The King's Lynn Transport Strategy document adopted by both the Borough and County Councils in 2020 can be found on the link to the NCC Website page where it can also be downloaded. The King's Lynn Transport Strategy nests under the overarching Norfolk Fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) but the HA may need to review this document to reflect

any new requirements due to the recently announced County Deal for Norfolk (December 2022). However, if agreed, devolution of powers will only commence from May 2024.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/major-projects-and-improvement-plans/kings-lynn/about-transport-for-kings-lynn>

2.3 Since adoption, the King's Lynn Transport Strategy has been augmented by the development of the King's Lynn Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which can be downloaded from the following page on the NCC Website. This was adopted by both the Borough and County Councils in 2022.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/roads-and-travel-policies/local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plans>

2.4 NCC has also adopted a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) under Government's Bus Back Better (BBB) initiative which has attracted significant funding (£50m) confirmed by DfT in 2022. This can be downloaded from the Norfolk County Council website on the following page and includes a number of measures in the King's Lynn area, some of which we have agreed with DfT for a programme of bus improvements and initiatives to be delivered in King's Lynn over the next 3 years. These include:

- Bus priority measures: £4,303,500
- Travel hubs and bus stop upgrades: £1,250,000
- Real-time information: £625,000
- Improved and new services: £875,000 - £1,100,000
- Flat fares scheme: £507,000

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/policy-performance-and-partnerships/policies-and-strategies/roads-and-travel-policies/public-transport-policies/national-bus-strategy>

3.0 Transport Modelling

3.1 A strategic transport model of the King's Lynn area has been built using the SATURN suite of programs based on traffic survey data and using mobile phone network data to determine origin and destinations. This strategic model includes all of the allocations and future developments set out in the Local Plan. As such, it takes account of all the anticipated growth and predicted traffic increases in the King's Lynn area.

3.2 In 2019 the strategic model was used in combination with detailed microsimulation modelling (Paramics) to investigate and evaluate key transport schemes and measures likely to improve traffic conditions in the town and taking account of future growth as per the extant Local Plan to 2026. This included:

- Solutions for addressing traffic congestion and poor local air quality on the town centre gyratory one way system

- Solutions for addressing traffic congestion at the Southgates roundabout on the southern approach to the town – including whether diverting London Road around the historic South Gate would assist
- The impact of allowing other vehicle types to use the Hardings Way sustainable transport route in an attempt to relieve the London Road corridor

3.3 The HA continues to pursue solutions for the gyratory and the Southgates area and these are described in section 4. The work undertaken on the Hardings Way sustainable transport route indicated that allowing other vehicle types to use this corridor would not have a significant beneficial affect on the transport network.

3.4 The most significant scheme to enable large scale growth in the King's Lynn area, by mitigating the impacts of additional traffic and providing a strategic improvement to the A10 to address existing problems, is the West Winch Housing Access Road (WWHAR). It was understood that the full growth in the West Winch Growth Area (WWGA), up to 4,000 homes, would not occur until during the next Local Plan period after 2026 so a future year of 2036 was chosen. The traffic forecasting for the WWHAR, submitted as part of the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC), included all of the local plan allocations input spatially and was controlled to government forecasts to ensure all the other growth in the King's Lynn area by 2036 was included, and to ensure compliance with government guidance. The SOBC can be downloaded from the following webpage:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/major-projects-and-improvement-plans/kings-lynn/west-winch-housing-access-road/developing-the-access-road>

3.5 The A10 West Winch Housing Access Road now has an approved Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and Norfolk County Council is currently preparing an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme. The transport modelling underpinning this work conforms to Department for Transport (DfT) standards and is continually being updated as the business case work progresses.

3.6 The traffic modelling and forecasting for the WWHAR is being updated for the Outline Business Case (OBC) which is to be submitted to the DfT in Summer/Autumn 2023 alongside the planning application. The details of this work have been agreed with DfT and will be set out in an Appraisal Specification Report (ASR) which is currently in preparation. This model refresh will make use of updated origin and destination data from 2019 (derived from Mobile Network Data (MND)) and traffic counts undertaken in autumn 2022.

3.7 The modelling described above has enabled the HA and LPA to determine which key schemes to incorporate into the transport strategy Implementation Plan. Not all transport schemes and measures can be assessed using conventional strategic and detailed traffic modelling, but this is not a prerequisite. As such many other transport schemes and measures were included in the King's Lynn Transport Strategy Implementation Plan. This includes measures that are being taken forward now and others the HA will want to take forward at a later date.

3.8 The WWHAR scheme includes an LTN 1/20 compliant walking and cycling route along the western side of the housing access road part of the wider WWHAR scheme. This

includes good walking and cycling linkages across the route on Chequers Lane and Rectory Lane which connect West Winch with the neighbouring village of North Runcton. It also includes Active Travel links back into the growth area.

3.9 Notwithstanding, in discussion with DfT and in line with the rapidly changing transport agenda, the HA was asked to commit to further Active Travel measures and bus priority for inclusion in the scheme as it is developed further during the preparation of the Outline Business Case (OBC). The HA has also been asked to prepare a Sustainable Transport Strategy and engage with Active Travel England during this process. This work is currently underway.

3.10 In parallel with this work on the WWHAR the LPA is developing a WWGA masterplan, which will become a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This will also include sustainable and active travel measures and link to the town wide LCWIP.

3.11 The strategic modelling work carried out by the HA in 2019 to inform the transport strategy, and subsequent modelling work on specific transport interventions like the WWHAR, has satisfied Norfolk County Council that there are no significant transport impediments to the proposed spatial distribution of the Local Plan allocations. The only proviso is that the WWHAR is an essential prerequisite for the 4,000 homes in the WWGA, and there is a clear delivery mechanism for this intervention.

3.12 It is also clear that the housing growth trajectories anticipated for 2026 are unlikely to materialise to any great extent based on current housing delivery. So, in a sense much of the predictions for 2026 are likely to be similar to those now predicted for 2036

3.13 As acknowledged at the Examination into the SADMP in autumn 2015, for all of the large allocations there would be Transport Assessments to support individual planning applications. These would identify the transport issues and propose essential mitigation measures to be agreed with the LPA and be delivered by S106 agreements. Large developments that have already been granted permission are listed below.

Development Site	Transport Assessment Yes/No	Mitigation
Knights Hill (Grimston Road approx. 650 Dwellings)	Yes – application determined at Public Inquiry	Roundabout on Grimston Road, Signals at Langley Road/Grimston Road, contribution to improvements to Wootton Gap junction. Public transport contribution and Travel Plan
Parkway (approx. 225 dwellings)	Yes – Permission granted	Enhanced sustainable travel links including funding some of the LCWIP schemes. Public transport/travel plan contribution
Land off Edward Benefer Way (575 Dwellings)	Yes – Permission granted	Access roundabout, links through to the north (Nursery Lane) and contribution to improvements at Wootton Gap.

NORA	Yes – Permission granted	Nar Ouse Way was constructed to facilitate employment.
Marsh Lane and Lynnsport developments	Yes – Permission granted	New road (Lynnsport Way) allowing a new connection through from Edward Benefer Way to Greenpark Avenue.
Hardwick Employment	Yes – Outline permission	Green Yard Way constructed to facilitate employment.

3.14 Notwithstanding the above, in response to current policy, there is a much greater presumption to promoting sustainable transport to reduce the traffic impact of new developments rather than mitigating traffic impacts solely by increased highway capacity.

4.0 Evolution of the Transport Strategy

4.1 In addition to the 2019 modelling work, further study, scheme development and traffic modelling work has been carried out on, amongst other things, the town centre gyratory improvement and solutions to address problems in the Southgates area.

4.2 In light of the LPA’s Southgates masterplanning work, the transport scheme at Southgates is now focussed on bus priority and Active Travel to enable a comprehensive regeneration of the area. The Southgates masterplan is anticipated to be adopted during early 2023 and builds on the previous Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) work and adopted place-based Town Investment Plan (TIP), which has attracted £25m Town Deal funding from government. The visionary transport scheme at Southgates forms part of a £24m bid to the government’s Levelling Up Fund (LUF) submitted by the HA in August 2022 and government are expected to make a decision by the end of January 2023. The scheme reduces the dominance of traffic by reconfiguring the Southgates roundabout into a junction that has bus priority and better facilities for cyclists and pedestrians. This junction lies on the key corridor into the town from the West Winch Growth Area and will help in getting more people to use active travel or public transport to access the town. This will also be assisted by the proposed BSIP scheme that will introduce bus priority measures on Hardwick Road.

4.3 The town centre gyratory scheme also now has a broader focus and includes measures on the priority active travel routes set out in the LCWIP and bus priority measures devised with input from bus operators to address identified concerns. The current scheme also has close links with the Borough Council’s adopted Public Realm Action Plan and also formed part of the LUF bid

4.4 The Norfolk Strategic Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2020 [D18] refers to both an A17/A47 Pullover junction improvement and measures to improve traffic flow on the A149 King’s Lynn eastern bypass, Queen Elizabeth Way which suffers regular traffic congestion which is exacerbated at holiday times. The latter is referred to in the adopted Transport Strategy. Both of these schemes would significantly improve strategic journeys around King’s Lynn and provide a wider package of complementary bus priority and active travel measures.

4.5 The A17/A47 Pullover roundabout is the junction of the two major east-west routes into Norfolk from the west/north and has long come under traffic pressures. An opportunity

to fund an improvement at the A17/A47 Pullover junction arose when government launched the Major Road Network (MRN) fund. The intervention is supported by the Sub-National Transport Body, Transport East, and an initial submission made to the MRN fund in 2019. The scheme, which also includes complementary active travel measures, is now on government's agreed MRN programme and Norfolk County Council has carried out scheme development work and prepared a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) which is likely to be submitted in early 2023.

4.6 A strategic improvement to the A149 would need to include a significant package of accompanying complementary bus priority and Active Travel measures. No funding source has yet been identified for this scheme, but it is likely to require a significant amount, for example, from a future round of DfT Large Local Major (LLM) scheme funding as the A149 is not on the MRN network. It is anticipated that Norfolk County Council will be commencing pre-SOC initial scheme development work in 2023 with many of the complementary bus priority and Active Travel measures stemming from the existing and ongoing Transport Strategy work.