

Draft Thanet Transport Strategy

Thanet Joint Transportation Board – 11 December 2018

Report Author	Director of Corporate Resources
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Robert Bayford, Leader & Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning
Status	For information/comment
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Previously Considered by	None
Ward:	All

Executive Summary:

The report sets out an overview of the revised draft of the Thanet Transport Strategy, including the response to the consultation and the next steps in relation to the examination of the emerging Thanet Local Plan.

Recommendation(s):

JTB is invited to comment on the report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS	
Financial and Value for Money	<i>None at this stage.</i>
Legal	The draft Transport Strategy is a key supporting document for the draft Local Plan process.
Corporate	The draft Transport Strategy is a key supporting document for the draft Local Plan process.
Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty	Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it,

	<p>and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr> <td>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.		Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,		Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	
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	<p>The PSED is engaged by the Transport Strategy. The draft Local Plan is the subject of a continuing Equalities Impact Assessment, which indicates that the duty is met by the draft policies in the Plan. The EqIA for the draft Local Plan indicates that the protected characteristics of age, race and disability would require closer analysis within the context of the 'top level' strategic priorities and proposals. This is based on a broad analysis of the local population, age structure and health issues in the area. Although not a 'protected characteristic' socio-economic issues would also form part of the analysis as being a significant issue for the district. Thanet has been identified for some years as an area experiencing issues of multiple deprivation in some areas, which affect people's quality of life and opportunities.</p> <p>The EqIA concludes that the transport policies, including those related to the Transport Strategy, assist with meeting the aims of the PSED, by seeking to ensure that every day travel by various modes of transport is accessible for the protected groups, and creates opportunity to access services and job opportunities. KCC is carrying out its own EqIA, which will be reported to their Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee in due course.</p> <p>It is therefore the view of officers that the duty is met by the policies set out in the draft Transport Strategy.</p>								

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant) ✓	
A clean and welcoming Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Promoting inward investment and job creation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Supporting neighbourhoods	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant) ✓	
Delivering value for money	
Supporting the Workforce	
Promoting open communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Thanet Transport Strategy (TTS) is intended to replace the former Thanet Transport Plan (2005) and provides a framework of transport policy to the year 2031,

to support planned growth within the Thanet District as outlined within the emerging Thanet Local Plan.

- 1.2 The proposed TTS earmarks considerable investment in highway infrastructure, providing high level highway solutions to facilitate the proposed growth of 17,140 new dwellings and 5000 new jobs, up to 2031. The draft TTS was recently endorsed by the Council (TDC) and will be subject to a further round of governance by KCC in due course.
- 1.3 This paper is being presented to JTB in line with the Thanet Local Plan examination process. Members will be aware that the draft Local Plan has now been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent Examination, and two Inspectors have been appointed to carry out the Examination.

2.0 The Strategy, funding & consultation responses

The Strategy

- 2.1 The existing Thanet Transport Plan was adopted in 2005. Many of the measures that were identified 12 years ago have been implemented successfully. The growth proposed within the emerging Thanet Local Plan has instigated a review of the existing transport challenges, and a new strategy is now required to meet the future needs of the local highway network.
- 2.2 The TTS has been developed over the last 2-3 years with feedback from both District & County Members, through ongoing informal briefing sessions. A previous version of the TTS was presented to the Joint Transportation Board in December 2017. This was based on the previous draft of the draft Thanet Local Plan and was subsequently endorsed.
- 2.3 The headline aims and measures of this revised TTS remain largely unchanged from the draft that was considered by JTB last year. However, there are some changes to this document, as follows:
 - Removal of the local distributor road link between A299 Thanet Way (at cliffsend) and B2050 Manston Road; and
 - Inclusion of a new link road between Shottendane Road and Hartsdown Road, to provide alternative routes for traffic avoiding the busy Coffin House Corner Junction.
- 2.4 The key aims of the Transport Strategy are that Thanet will have a safe, accessible, affordable, sustainable, reliable and integrated transport network incorporating improved road, public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes.
- 2.5 There are numerous interventions identified within the TTS, however the major focus is the creation of an Inner Circuit Route Improvement Strategy (ICRIS), encompassing new & improved inner highway routes to complement the existing Primary Road Network. These improvements are intended to enhance local route choice and provide the opportunity to deliver public transport access to existing and future residents in the district in a more commercially practical way. Positive

engagement with several developers related to the potential delivery of on-site sections of the ICRIS has already taken place.

- 2.6 To inform land use option testing, a Strategic Highway Model was developed to test the impact of the draft Local Plan allocations and any identified road interventions. Outputs and reports from this modelling exercise suggest that travel demand will inevitably increase as more houses are delivered, however with the provision of new highway routes will help to spread the subsequent traffic impact across a wider area thus managing traffic impacts on key links within the district.
- 2.7 In line with national planning policy, it is important to deliver development in a sustainable way, as such in addition to the ICRIS, there are several proposed interventions which seek to improve walking and cycling facilities.
- 2.8 There are four key themes that underpin the Transport Strategy. These are:

Encourage Sustainable Travel Habits:

- Introduction of new cycle and pedestrian routes.
- Improvements to existing cycle and pedestrian routes.
- Extend and improve access to bus travel through increased frequency and network coverage.
- Implement improvements to the highway network to improve bus journey time reliability.
- Provision of a new Parkway Rail Station at Cliffsend.
- Ensure that new and existing bus infrastructure is delivered or renewed with easy access in mind.
- Ensure that developments provide appropriate walking and cycling facilities.
- Car Parking Strategy

Manage Journey Times:

- Provision of new & improved inner highway routes to complement existing primary road network.
- Localised junction improvements to improve traffic flow and levels of service.
- Reduction in the need to travel

Improve Network Resilience:

- Provision of new & improved inner highway routes to complement existing primary road network.
- Improve journey time reliability within the local road network by providing new link roads and junction improvements to avoid congestion.
- Improved directional signage

Reduce the Requirement to Travel:

- Promotion of mixed-use development where appropriate.
- Robust Travel Planning Measures to be implemented for new developments.
- Encourage Car Sharing.
- Improved communication infrastructure (High Speed Broadband).

Finance/Funding

- 2.9 Most measures detailed in the TTS, including the significant elements of road infrastructure, are linked to the larger development allocations and therefore have potential sources of developer funding.
- 2.10 It is anticipated that necessary highway infrastructure will be funded by development with no financial commitment being placed on TDC or KCC. The draft Plan is seeking to use s106 agreements to deliver the key infrastructure related to the delivery of the strategic sites. However, it is also possible that TDC will seek to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy to encompass certain elements of infrastructure to ensure that the strategy is funded in a financially equitable way across the district.
- 2.11 It is expected that in addition to the developer funding, that external funding will be sought to encourage rapid delivery of housing. Both TDC & KCC have recently submitted bids for external funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund and Local Growth Fund for highway infrastructure contained within the TTS. Other sources of external funding will be subject to competitive bidding process as and when they are announced.

Consultation

- 2.12 The TTS is a core document associated with the draft Thanet Local Plan, and as such was published as part of the Local Plan Publication stage (Regulation 19) between 23rd August and 4th October 2018. Stakeholder representations have been compiled and the draft Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 30th October for subsequent Examination.
- 2.13 There were a total of 11 formal representations received specifically in relation to the TTS, with further comments referenced within Local Plan responses to other related policy matters such as individual housing sites and sustainable travel.
- 2.14 The responses to the TTS related to a number of matters – the importance of walking, cycling, bridleways and public transport as part of the transport network; possible environmental implications of new infrastructure; objections to specific routing of new infrastructure; and possible impacts on the strategic route network (A2/M2); and whether the TTS meets the “soundness” test for the Local Plan process. A number of representations concerned the designation of the Airport Site and the lack of reference to air travel within the draft TTS.
- 2.15 Queries have also been raised about the geographical coverage of the strategic model, which was focused on Westwood and the urban edge. However, officers consider that the coverage is proportionate to the purposes of the Local Plan appraisal and encompass the anticipated impact from the majority of new strategic housing allocations and associated highway infrastructure earmarked within the Plan and TTS.
- 2.16 In addition to some of the matters mentioned above, there are a number of comments made in relation to the draft Local Plan, which are directly relevant to the draft Transport Strategy. These relate to objections to the proposed Parkway Station, to concerns about the viability and deliverability of the Inner Circuit. However, both

these projects are regarded as key for meeting the infrastructure needs arising from the development set out in the draft Local Plan.

- 2.17 It is considered that the draft TTS is a balanced approach to meeting future transport needs, and is a reasonable and evidence-based strategy to support the draft Local Plan and improve transport around, and in and out of, the district over the period of the Local Plan.
- 2.18 No changes to the draft TTS are recommended as a result of the comments received through the consultation.
- 2.19 The draft TTS focuses on the transport implications of the development proposals identified in the draft Local Plan. The TTS is intended to be a fluid document and as such will be subject to periodic review or as local circumstances change.
- 2.20 It is anticipated that the Examination in Public (EiP) for the draft Thanet Local Plan will take place in Q1/Q2 of 2019. It is likely that these issues will be considered further as part of that Examination process.
- 2.21 The TTS seeks to balance the needs of all road users and proposes a significant investment in highway Infrastructure to provide a more flexible and resilient local highway network.
- 2.22 It is anticipated that infrastructure will be funded by developer contributions and highway agreements; however it may also include a level of external funding (from sources such as Housing Infrastructure Fund and National Productivity Investment Fund). There will be no financial commitment placed on KCC or TDC.
- 2.23 Further technical design/assessment work and subsequent stakeholder consultation will inform the specification and delivery of final infrastructure proposals.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 In considering this report, there are 2 options:
- 3.2 Option 1 – to make comments for consideration by the KCC Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee; or
- 3.3 Option 2 – to not make any further comments.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 Once this report has been considered by JTB, it will be presented to KCC's Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee on 17th January 2019 (TBC).

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Annex List

Annex 1	Draft Thanet District Transport Strategy 2015-2031
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
Draft Thanet District Transport Strategy 2015-2031	https://consult.thanet.gov.uk/gf2.ti/-/875394/39880005.1/PDF/-/INDraft Thanet Transport Strategy July 18.pdf
Publication draft Thanet Local Plan (Submitted for Examination 30-10-18	https://www.thanet.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/C_D1.1-Draft-Thanet-Local-Plan-Reg-19.pdf

Corporate Consultation

N/A.