

An initial response to the County Council, based upon the three themes of accessibility, environmental quality and safety, is set out below. The response has been structured to reflect the District Council's Corporate Priorities, Adopted District Plan 1st Alteration and Adopted Transport Strategy.

Summary of key points

- The delivery of the WWSTS remains a key priority for the District Council. In particular, improving accessibility to the district's employment opportunities and providing the infrastructure necessary for sustainable growth.
- Addressing the issue of the identified Air Quality Action Areas. The District Council highlights the air quality problems in Bradford on Avon and Westbury and seeks a comprehensive solution urgently.
- The environmental enhancement of the district's market towns is a key corporate objective for the District Council. LTP II is an appropriate mechanism to implement improvements to the townscape and general street scene of the five towns, including traffic management and pedestrian priority schemes.
- Providing the residents of West Wiltshire with safe and easily accessible travel options.

Accessibility

Improving access to the district's employment opportunities:

- This directly meets the corporate objective of improving the district's market towns by helping to maintain and enhance their vitality and through the development of sustainable communities. This also meets the objectives of the current LTP's Western Wiltshire Sustainable Transport Strategy. The District Council has expressed concern that the draft Regional Spatial Strategy makes no provision for the sustainable growth required to develop sustainable communities within western Wiltshire.
- Improving the accessibility of employment opportunities for local people. This priority encompasses the objective of locating new and future employment opportunities in sustainable locations and in maintaining inward economic investment within the WWSTS area. It also includes the objective of providing employees with a choice of travel options that encourage more sustainable travel patterns. The consistent provision of green travel plans across the County is considered an appropriate mechanism for achieving this objective.
- This meets the District Council's long-term objective for improvements to the A350 at Westbury through the provision of the Glenmore link, which improves access from the A350 to the West Wilts, Northacre Park and Brook Lane Trading Estates.
- Delivery of the Westbury Rail Freight Terminal. This will meet the District Plan objective of increasing freight accessibility to the Westbury trading estates and serve to encourage the long-term objective of modal shift from road to rail.

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- Completion of the Hampton Park/ Bowerhill extension distributor road network. This will increase accessibility to these strategic employment sites, helping to release allocated employment land for future development.
- Improvement to the flow of through traffic along the A350 in Melksham, particularly to the north of the town at Beanacre. This meets the broad aims of the WWSTS by improving the overall level of access from Junction 17 of the M4 to Warminster.

Improving access to public transport

- This directly meets the corporate objective of improving the district's market towns helping to create sustainable communities. It indirectly meets the objective of improving environmental quality within the five market towns by encouraging the long-term modal shift from the privately owned motor car to more sustainable travel options.
- Improvements to transport interchanges. Particular emphasis is given to improving the interchange between public transport modes at Melksham Railway Station. This will make the Station vibrant and viable. Such improvements will form part of the redevelopment of the adjoining former-GEC site. The District Council believes that the enhancement of Melksham Station will help in maintaining the viability of the Westbury – Swindon service. The continuation of the service is considered to be vital in encouraging sustainable commuting travel patterns between western Wiltshire and the Swindon PUA. Retention of the service is the subject of a specific policy within the District Plan.
- The District Council believes that the retention of the rail link between West Wiltshire and Waterloo Station, London is essential in maintaining sustainable travel patterns. The District Council considers that the loss of this link will lead to an increase in car trips out of the district to Chippenham, where a comparable rail link exists. This will have a negative impact upon the objectives of the WWSTS.
- The safeguarding of former railway station sites with the long-term objective of re-opening them for use. This has the potential benefit of encouraging sustainable travel patterns within the district's more peripheral urban and rural areas. A comprehensive list of existing and possible new stations is set out in LTP I, with the objective of examining the feasibility of re-opening these stations. The District Council suggests that the LTP II continue to examine this exercise.
- The District Council supports those LTP policies that encourage the development of either new commercial or voluntary bus links. In particular, the District Council welcomes the development of links between the district's rural communities and the five market towns, and to the wider services and facilities that are available to the district's residents in the adjoining PUAs.

Environmental Quality

Addressing the identified air quality management areas

- Improving the air quality in Bradford on Avon and Westbury town centres directly meets the corporate objectives for improving the quality of life within the five market towns. The District Council believes that a comprehensive approach be taken in addressing the Air Quality Management Areas within these two towns. The District Council considers the proposed bypass for Westbury to be an important element towards a solution to Westbury's problem – although other transport improvements will also be required.
- In Bradford on Avon the District Council seeks continued investigation into possible solutions, whether they be developed as part of the land-use planning system, or as distinct LTP II schemes.

Town centre environmental enhancements

- Maintaining the district's five market towns as vibrant and attractive places is an overall aim within the corporate plan. The Adopted District Plan has a specific policy that seeks to improve the traffic management and pedestrian priority to enable environmental enhancement and to improve the general air quality. The District Council believes that such improvements will have the wider impact of enhancing the shopping environment and local commercial economy. The Wiltshire Strategic Board has recently confirmed this position.
- The District Council has been working closely with a number of partners, including the County Council, in a visioning exercise that seeks to revitalise Trowbridge, the County town. There are a number of vacant sites located within the town centre that provide redevelopment opportunities that could, if developed cohesively, help achieve regeneration for the town. The exercise has demonstrated that improvements to the town centres transport infrastructure and services need to be fully integrated within the context of regeneration. Specifically, the objective is to create a quality environment where the car's dominance is reduced and alternatives to the car are made more viable.
- The District Council has in partnership with the County Council, commissioned the development of a parking strategy for Trowbridge town centre. The implementation of the strategy will form an integral role in the regeneration of the town and its continued development as a sustainable community.

Safety

- Providing a safe transport network for the residents of the district. In particular, the District Council considers the proposed improvements to the A36 between Heytesbury and Codford to be vital towards the enhancement of highway safety.
- Improvements to the highway safety along the A350 between Junction 17 of the M4 and Warminster as a mechanism for improving accessibility throughout the WWSTS area. In particular, the District Council welcomes

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investigation into the perceived accident black spot identified between West Ashton and Yarnbrook.

- The District Council supports that the continued use of interactive technology, within highway signage, as a mechanism for improving highway safety.
- The provision of an inter-urban cycle network linking the five market towns is considered to be efficient method for encouraging safe sustainable trips. The District Council, in conjunction with the County Council, has already completed a route between Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon. The next priority is for the provision of a safe route between Westbury and Trowbridge.