

Key messages

- This Plan is setting out Oxfordshire's ambition, to support growth and the economy and maximises our chances of securing funding by being clear about what we need and want for transport.
- Funding decisions on all major investment priorities are to be made by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, and we will be in competition with other authorities (as well as with non-transport priorities)
- This is a long term plan for the future of Oxfordshire's transport infrastructure, taking forward plans for car, bus, rail, cycle and walking
- Also sets out Oxfordshire's ambition to become a greener county by promoting low and zero emission vehicles in the city and providing greater mass transit links and better integrated transport as well as improving health and wellbeing through improved cycle and walking options
- This is the next phase of the plan which builds on the extensive 'Connecting Oxfordshire' consultation from last year
- The final consultation phase is being carried out and will end on 2nd April 2015, giving residents, businesses and key stakeholders a final opportunity to contribute to the plans

FAQ

- **Why do we need a Local Transport Plan?**

Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 sets out the council's high level, county-wide policy and strategy for transport. It has an important role in helping to secure the infrastructure necessary to support economic and housing growth in the county, by setting out clearly what we want to achieve, and why it is necessary.

- **How have environmental issues been taken into account?**

These are included in some of the Plan's key Policies, Objectives and scheme proposals. A high level 'Strategic Environmental Assessment' has also been completed, which we are also consulting on

- **How have equalities issues – particularly those affecting people who are mobility impaired or without car access– been addressed?**

We have specific policies and proposals built in, to ensure that this is a Plan that will benefit the whole of Oxfordshire

- **Why isn't there more detail on plans for the A34 and A40 in the plan?**

Detailed strategy work is underway on both of these critical routes. The Plan will be updated with details when we have clearer proposals and options for consideration.

- **What is the purpose of the consultation? What effect could it have on the final plan?**

To give people an opportunity to see what we are proposing and comment.

- **What happens after the consultation?**

Your feedback will be reviewed and any changes agreed incorporated into the final version of the LTP. Following this process, the plan will be looked at by members of the council prior to being formally adopted in June/July.

- **How will this all be paid for?**

Councils no longer receive direct funding to spend on new transport schemes. Instead capital funding from central government for local projects has been pooled into a single Local Growth Fund (LGF). The government have given responsibility for deciding on priorities for investment and putting in bids for the LGF to the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP). To ensure the best outcomes for Oxfordshire, decisions on priorities are being taken by the Local Growth Board which includes County and District Councils and the LEP.

Bids are then considered in competition with non-transport schemes and schemes from other LEPs across the country. Limited funding opportunities do exist from other sources, such as developer contributions and specific grants from central government.

- **How will projects be prioritised?**

Where projects are dependent on funding through the LGF, these priorities will be influenced by the growth aims of the Oxfordshire LEP. The LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) sets out the investment that will be required to realise this growth. The SEP's focus on high tech economic activity means funding for transport schemes will to some extent be focused on links within the area encompassing Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale, known as the Knowledge

Spine, as well as improving access to it from important centres elsewhere in Oxfordshire, the UK and overseas.

Where projects are to be funded by other means, projects will be prioritised based on various factors. Sometimes they will be required to enable housing growth and other new development, other times the decision will be based on when specific funding bidding opportunities become available.

- **When will we see projects delivered?**

This document is not a schedule of schemes that will all be implemented.

Rather it sets out our general approach to improving the transport network in Oxfordshire and outlines our goals and aspirations, some of which are long-term or on-going projects.

There are many schemes mentioned to which we are already committed, the estimated timescales and delivery targets for which are detailed in various sections of the LTP. However, due to the current economic climate and the resultant cuts in the budgets of local authorities, and the need to bid in competition with other authorities for funds, it can be hard to predict when and if schemes which are not yet committed will go ahead.

- **What involvement will outside organisations have in the delivery of projects? Primarily the bus and rail options.**

In most cases the ultimate responsibility for the delivery of rail schemes lies with various organisations within the rail industry, specifically Network Rail and individual train operators. We will work in close partnership with these

organisations to further our aspirations for improvements to the rail network and its associated infrastructure.

For bus projects, we will continue to work closely with bus operators to further develop and improve Oxfordshire's high quality bus network, including new 'rapid transit' and Park & Ride schemes. Much of the necessary infrastructure for improvements to services is the responsibility of the council, but we will work with the bus operators to take these forward alongside service improvements and new vehicles that can be provided commercially.

- **How involved were the District Councils in the area strategy plans?**

We have worked closely with District Councils on developing these plans, and ensuring they are consistent with what is being included in District led Local Plans, so that transport and development can be considered together.

- **Will they be involved in prioritisation and delivery?**

Yes, as partners on the Local Growth Board

- **Why isn't there an area strategy for my town/village?**

If an area or settlement isn't specifically mentioned this does not mean that it has been ignored; the document sets out an overall strategy for the whole of Oxfordshire and in this sense everywhere has been considered important. Area Strategies have been developed for those parts of the county due to experience significant housing and/or employment growth.

- **Why are we building more roads and increasing capacity? Doesn't this just create more demand?**

While there are some schemes already scheduled for construction and further proposals for new roads, in the main these are to enable access to new developments. Elsewhere, such is the pressure of traffic, increases to the capacity of existing roads is necessary to the functioning of the road network, not just for cars, but for all road users.

Additionally, where made possible by available funding and where space is available, schemes that benefit or enable the use of sustainable modes of transport have been explored at every opportunity.

- **How have the schemes/strategies in this document been formulated?**

Through a combination of evidence and research, various consultation processes, and dialogue with a wide variety of stakeholders. The viability and feasibility of schemes have been assessed in order to establish the best possible options based on the constraints imposed upon, and opportunities available, to the County Council.

- **Who is responsible for delivering improvements to the A34/M40?**

In most instances these roads are the responsibility of the Highways Agency. However, we work closely with the HA and have developed a number of our own schemes to improve specific junctions and interchanges, especially in the Science Vale area, to give better access to housing and jobs.