

2 November 2020		ITEM: 7
Local Development Plan Task Force		
Sustainable travel and movement in Thurrock : Transport Strategy Refresh update		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	

This is a report which was previously considered at Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny which is being submitted to the Local Development Plan Task Force for information only.

Executive Summary

Thurrock has one of the most significant growth-led regeneration agendas in the country. It is vital to ensure future growth is supported by the right transport infrastructure, providing sustainable travel options for our communities and businesses whilst reducing congestion and improving air quality.

In order to ensure that the required infrastructure is provided, it is necessary to update the Council's existing Transport Strategy (adopted in 2013) to identify current and future needs and opportunities for intervention to support sustainable growth.

This report provides an update on the steps taken to develop an Interim Transport Strategy. This will lead to the development of a refreshed Thurrock Transport Strategy (TTS), setting out the package of work and various integrating policies, strategies and technical studies that need to be progressed and delivered to support the TTS and the new Local Plan.

1. Introduction and Background

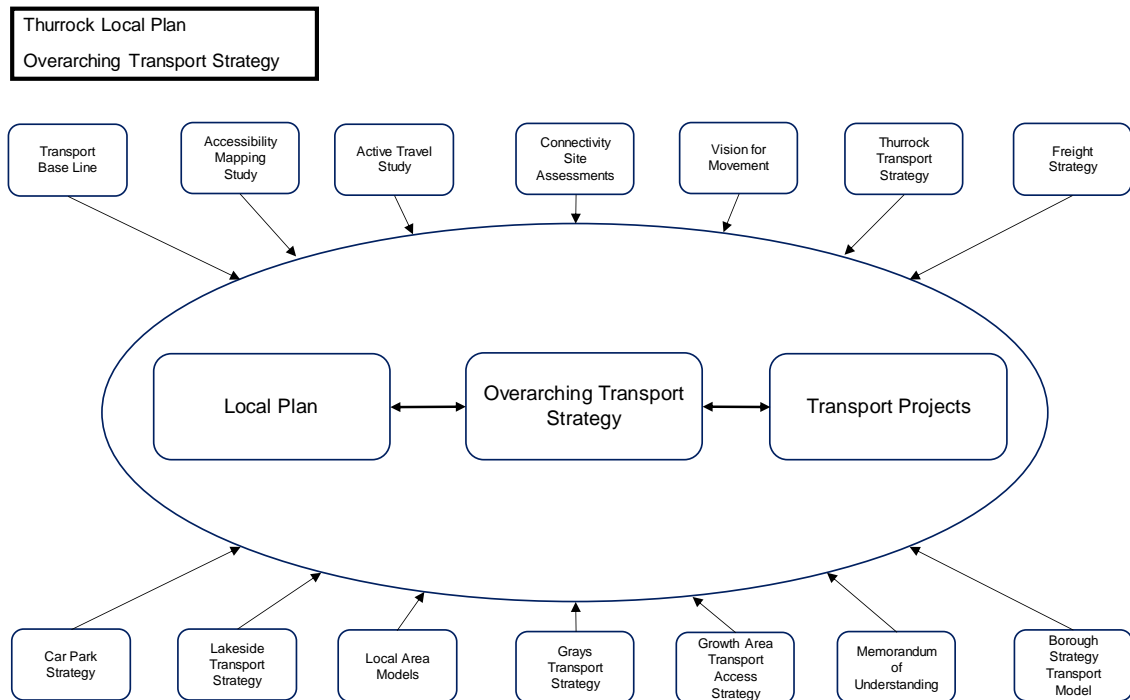
- 1.1 The Council is updating the Thurrock Transport Strategy, which was adopted in 2013. An updated Transport Strategy is required to integrate and support the Thurrock Local Plan and to identify the infrastructure projects that will be needed to deliver the growth ambitions in the Local Plan.
- 1.2 There are a number of steps in the process of preparing the updated Transport Strategy, including technical baseline assessments, strategic transport visioning and engagement with statutory consultees, partner agencies, businesses and community groups.
- 1.3 There will be a suite of supporting strategies and plans that accompany the Transport Strategy, including but not limited to work streams including Active Travel, Parking, Freight, Air Quality and Health. Some of these supporting

strategies are completed, some are underway, others yet to start. An emerging work programme is summarised at Appendix A for information.

- 1.4 The Council is in the first stages of an overall update to the strategy and are currently undertaking a number of transport studies.
- 1.5 This work focuses on the production of an Interim Transport Strategy to support the Local Plan Draft and subsequently a full Transport Strategy to support the formal Local Plan Submission.

2. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 2.1 The Transport Strategy supports the development of the Local Plan. It articulates the transport implications and opportunities arising from the ambitious growth and development plans to be set out in the emerging Local Plan.
- 2.2 The Transport Strategy will:
 - Be strategic in nature;
 - Set out a high-level vision for future transport in Thurrock;
 - Identify major, local and site-specific transport infrastructure required to deliver the growth and development within the Local Plan;
 - Inform and integrate with a series of planning and transport studies that will run in parallel;
 - Combine a flexible long-term plan with more specific proposals for short and medium-term delivery of transport infrastructure;
 - Align with the Council's wider corporate objectives and the views of local communities;
 - Support wider sustainable development objectives;
 - Align with national transport infrastructure plans including the proposed Lower Thames Crossing and motorway junction improvements;
 - Align with emerging transport and local plans of neighbouring authorities and key external relationships including Highways England, DfT, ASELA and Transport East (Sub-national Transport Body). This is particularly important to maximise potential to secure future government funding.
- 2.3 As set out above, the Transport Strategy should be developed in parallel with the Local Plan. It should properly assess all the likely transport interventions required to deliver sustainable growth in the Borough and define and establish details of specific transport infrastructure. Members are aware of the need to ensure the Local Plan is supported by a sound evidence base and in order to develop a solid Transport Strategy it is necessary to take into account all relevant transport baseline studies, planned and committed infrastructure projects and strategies underway or proposed to be undertaken. A list of these studies and documents are outlined below.



- 2.4 The most important piece of initial supporting evidence is the Transport Baseline Study which will set out the current condition of the Borough in terms of transport infrastructure. Work on the Transport Baseline Study is already underway. The Council has commissioned a series of further studies of direct relevance to the Transport Strategy. These include a Thurrock-wide development capacity study, the production of development frameworks for key growth areas and a town centre framework for the Lakeside Basin.
- 2.5 The Transport Strategy also needs to be shaped against the findings of Issues & Options Stage 2 and developed alongside the spatial options for growth as the Local Plan progresses, taking into account major schemes and opportunities including Lower Thames Crossing, London Resort, TEP, mass transit (Tram), river travel and cleaner / healthier sustainable travel options. The production of the Transport Strategy will be staged, with an interim TTS to support the Draft Plan followed by revised final TTS to support the final Plan submission.
- 2.6 The provision of accurate traffic modelling and air quality assessment modelling will Play an important role in understanding the impact that growth will have on the transport network over the coming years. The ability to model and understand these impacts will help to inform how and where growth can be accommodated in Thurrock.
- 2.7 Members will be aware that on the 6th August 2020 the Government announced its plans to reform the planning system. It is possible that the number and scope of studies to support the development of the Transport Strategy and the Local Plan may change. However it is important to maintain momentum with the

current Local Plan and continue with the preparation of this supporting evidence and studies. The Council is in discussions with MHCLG to ensure that all work to support the current Local Plan (including work to prepare the TTS) can be carried over into any new planning system.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 It is important Members understand the role of the Transport Strategy and how it supports the Local Plan. The approach set out in the report is considered necessary to create a bold, coherent and compelling transport narrative for Thurrock which supports and underpins the Council's growth ambitions.

3.2 The information and process set out within this report provides a high level summary of the amount of work required, how it integrates with the emerging Local Plan and how it is shaped by wider requirements. Input from this Committee will help to ensure there is ongoing momentum and support for the Transport Strategy.

4. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

4.1 The next step will be to develop an Interim Transport Strategy which will be submitted to the Council's consultation portal in due course. Consultation will run for a minimum of 6 weeks, allowing local residents, business and other interested parties to comment. The consultation document will also be promoted to local residents, interest groups and key stakeholders through established meetings, forums and interest groups.

5. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

5.1 The TTS will have an impact upon all communities within Thurrock. Developing a long term TTS which aligns with the Council's emerging Local Plan is vital to making Thurrock a place where people of all ages can work, play, live and stay in a clean environment that everyone has reason to take pride in.

6. Implications

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Senior Management Accountant

An operational and staffing budget is likely to be required to deliver the revised Transportation Strategy which has been estimated to cost between £200k and £300k. This will be funded using £240k of the Local Plan allocation (split into £120k per year for 2 years) and £60k from the Transport Development budget (split into £30k per year for two years).

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
Deputy Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Since this report is essentially an update to Members on progress to date and likely next steps, rather than one recommending any decision, there are no direct legal implications as such. By way of background to the key statutory provisions, the Council, as local transport authority, is required, under the Transport Act 2000, to develop policies, for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within its area and carry out its functions so as to implement those policies. These policies and proposals for their implementation must be set out in a Local Transport Plan, in one or more documents, to be prepared by the authority. The authority is required to keep this Plan under review and they may alter or replace it if they consider it appropriate to do so. There are detailed consultation requirements when preparing and reviewing a Plan. The Plan or any alterations to it must take into account relevant Government policy and have regard to Government guidance on climate change mitigation or adaption and on protection of or improvement to the environment. In due course, as soon as practicable after a new Plan has been prepared or the Plan has been altered, the authority will, amongst other things, need to publish it and send a copy of it to the Secretary of State for Transport.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer

There are no direct implications relating to this report. A Community Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the refreshed TTS.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Local Plan transport background studies

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix A - Transport work stream programme
- Appendix B – Local Plan transport background studies

Appendix A – Transport work stream programme

WORKSTREAM	TIMESCALES
Transport Evidence Base - Baseline Positioning and Visioning for Movement and Transport Strategy	Resume Q2 2020 Complete Q4 2020
Thurrock Vision for Movement	Start Q2 2020 Interim Q3 2020 Complete Q1 2021
Call for Sites Transport Connectivity Site Assessments	Start Q3 2020 Complete Report Q3 2021 Update Report Q2 2022
Thurrock Transport Strategy	Start Q4 2020 Complete Interim Strategy Q4 2022 Complete Final Strategy Q3 2023
Development of Thurrock Strategic Transport Model	Procure Model Development Q3 2020
Active Travel Strategy	Complete Q3 2020 Update Q4 2021
Thurrock Freight Strategy	Start Q3 2020 Draft Q2 2021 Final Q4 2021
Car Parking Strategy (enforcement; policy and strategy)	Complete Q3 2020 Refresh Q4 2021

Growth Area Transport Access Strategies	Start Q3 2020 produce detailed project specification for roll out on a consistent basis across the Borough.
Development of Local Area Transport Models	Start Q3 2020 produce detailed project specification for roll out on a consistent basis across the Borough.
Grays Town Centre Transport and Access Strategy	Start Q4 2020 – Q3 2021
Lakeside Transport Strategy	Start Refresh Q1 2021 Complete Q3 2021
Strategic Transport Scheme Business Case Development	To be agreed and commissioned on a rolling/staged basis commencing Q1 2021
Policy Development & Site Allocations	Start Q4 2021 Complete Q2 2022

Appendix B – Local Plan transport background studies

Local Plan transport background studies

National

- Decorabonising Transport, Department for Transport, March 2020
- Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy, Department of Transport, Industrial Strategy, March 2019
- Road Investment Strategy 2: 2020-2025, March 2020
- A time of unprecedented change in the transport system, The Future of Mobility, Government Office for Science, Foresight, January 2019

- Transport for a World City, National Infrastructure Commission, March 2016

Regional

- Thames Estuary Investment and Delivery Plan (Emerging)
- Essex Thameside Study, railway Investment Choices, Network Rail, July 2020
- South Essex Joint Strategic Plan Integrated Impact Assessment Scoping Report, LUC, May 2020
- Transport East, Emerging Transport Strategy and Next Steps for Transport East: Proposal for a 100day plan, May 2020
- South Essex Connectivity Strategy, Association of South Essex Local Authorities, Arup, March 2020
- Regional Evidence Base, Transport East, July 2019, WSP
- Transport for the South East, Economic Connectivity Review, Final Report, July 2018, Steer
- Economic Connectivity Review: Phase 1 Report, Transport for the South East, May 2018, Steer Davies Gleave
- ELTOS East, Transport for London (Planning), 28 September 2016
- Anglia Route Study, Long Term Planning Process Summary Document, Network Rail, March 2016

Lower Thames Crossing

- Lower Thames Crossing, Supplementary Consultation, March/April 2020, Highways England
- Lower Thames Crossing: Economic Costs Study, Final Report, Hatch Regeneris, Feb 2020

Local

- Local Plan Issues & Options (Stage 2) Consultation, Dec 18
- Thurrock Transport Strategy, 2013 – 2026, Thurrock Council
- Thurrock Traffic Management Plan 2012 – 2026, Thurrock Council, June 2012
- Local Highways Maintenance Challenge Fund application, 2019
- Thurrock Council Highways Resilience Plan and Network 2018
- Highways Asset Management Strategy, January 2018

Emerging

- Thurrock Active Travel Strategy, April 2020, Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd
- Parking Policy & Strategy, Thurrock Council, March 2020
- Parking Design and Development Standards, Thurrock Council, March 2020
- Parking Enforcement Strategy, Thurrock Council, March 2020
- Thurrock Freight Strategy, 2017/18, Thurrock Council (UPDATE UNDERWAY)
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Air Quality & Health Strategy and Modelling Assessment update, with supporting paper setting out the approach to a new document and AQ modelling. (STATUS TBC)
- Thurrock Council Infrastructure Baseline Assessment, Arup, May 2020
- Thurrock Modelling Support, Transport Modelling Discussion and Proposed Approach, Peter Brett,

August 2018

- Thurrock Opportunities and Constraints Report, WSP, 2017
- A Transport Strategy for Lakeside Regional Town Centre, ITP/DLA, June 2014 (Draft for Comment update Jan 2020)
- Air Quality and Health Strategy (Emerging TBC)
- Thurrock Health and Wellbeing Strategy