

Appendix 3: Equality Impacts Assessment (EqIA)

What in summary is the proposal being considered?

The approval of the District of Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan.

As the local transport and highway authority for Lancashire, the County Council is responsible for the preparation of a local transport plan (LTP) that sets out a strategy and priorities for transport and travel in the area and a delivery programme for transport improvements, sustainable travel, road safety and maintenance.

In order to determine its future transport planning and investment priorities, and provide a sound and defensible basis for decisions affecting development across Lancashire, the County Council has embarked on a programme to put in place highways and transport masterplans to cover the county.

The District of Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan seeks to deliver good, reliable connections for people, goods and services whilst offering choice, facilitating travel on foot, by cycle, bus and rail as well as by car and goods vehicle.

This masterplan sets out the highways and transport interventions we need to put in place so that by 2031:

- Lancaster city centre is vibrant and successful, with no air quality issues, no gyratory congestion and so no barriers to sustainable travel. Pedestrians and cyclists can move around easily and freely through safe and attractive public spaces. The centre is largely free of traffic and most of the vehicles that do need to be there are ultra-low emission.
- Without the gyratory to contend with, public transport is also more reliable and new links to South Lancaster mean that the University has been able to expand and maintain its prestigious reputation. Those who work in the area almost all commute by sustainable modes: on foot, by cycle or using the 'Lancaster Reach' bus rapid transit services operated by ultra-low emission vehicles.
- Morecambe is a revitalised town where everyone can get to where they want to go easily on foot or by bike and where the amazing promenade gives way seamlessly to an attractive and strong commercial centre. The town is now a 'must visit' attraction on the Lancashire Coast and Morecambe Bay tourist trails.
- In Heysham, the old village is an attractive tourist destination now readily accessible without a car. South Heysham and the Port are a thriving focal point for industry, with the link road providing superb access to the motorway network, complemented by improved access by public transport and by cycle.
- Carnforth is a hub for the north of the district, with redesigned public spaces making the centre a much more attractive place to visit. The station is now integral to the town centre and improved rail links provide easy access to jobs around Morecambe Bay and across into Yorkshire. The town is also a gateway

for visitors coming to enjoy the countryside and wildlife of the area, as well as its railway heritage.

- Galgate is a quiet village, no longer straddling the city's main link to the motorway.
- The rail network provides high quality, fast services to and from Morecambe and rail travel around the Bay is straightforward. Many more passengers use the Bentham line as well. Public spaces around stations are now attractive and it is easy to walk and cycle to stations or to leave an electric car on charge.
- The 'Lancaster Links' network for non-motorised users is now comprehensive. For those who want direct routes, the roads are much quieter and safer for cyclists on the main radial routes in the district. For those who don't want to ride on the roads, there are dedicated links for all users between the main urban centres with quiet routes linking to them.
- The 'Links' network also connects the district to its neighbours to north and south through the long distance trails that bring a significant number of visitors to the district to explore the coast, the Lancaster Canal and the valley of the River Lune.

It should:

- Support the economic development of Lancaster and of the county as a whole
- Work to address deprivation
- Increase healthy behaviour
- Reduce the area's carbon footprint.

To do this, the masterplan seeks to ensure that:

- Sustainable travel becomes the choice wherever possible
- Local developments and business are supported and have the strategic and local connections that they need to succeed.
- People from all communities are able to access the employment and education opportunities that are available both in Lancaster and further afield.
- Active travel is encouraged and supported, making walking and cycling safe and easy choices for local journeys.
- Public realm improvements support both new development and existing communities and enhance the appearance and safety of sustainable travel routes.

- Visitors find the area attractive and easy to travel around without a car.

Is the decision likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected? If so you will need to consider whether there are equality related issues associated with the locations selected – e.g. greater percentage of BME residents in a particular area where a closure is proposed as opposed to an area where a facility is remaining open.

The masterplan is the fifth in a series of documents that will set out LCC's highways and transportation strategy across the county. This document is specific to the District of Lancaster. The demographics of the area have been taken into account in the development of the masterplan and form part of the evidence presented in the Environmental Report on the masterplan.

Could the decision have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

Age

Disability including Deaf people

Gender reassignment

Pregnancy and maternity

Race/ethnicity/nationality

Religion or belief

Sex/gender

Sexual orientation

Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

Yes, if considerations of such groups are not considered as part of the further work to be undertaken as a result of the approval of the masterplan. See below.

If you have answered "No" in relation to all the protected characteristics, please briefly document your reasons below and attach this to the decision-making papers. (It goes without saying that if the lack of impact is obvious, it need only be very briefly noted.)

Question 1 – Background Evidence

What information do you have about the different groups of people who may be affected by this decision – e.g. employees or service users (you could use monitoring data, survey data, etc. to compile this). As indicated above, the relevant protected characteristics are:

Age

Disability including Deaf people

Gender reassignment/gender identity

Pregnancy and maternity

Race/Ethnicity/Nationality

Religion or belief

Sex/gender

Sexual orientation

Marriage or Civil Partnership status (in respect of which the s. 149 requires only that due regard be paid to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation or other conduct which is prohibited by the Act).

All residents of and visitors to Lancaster district will be affected by the masterplan. Whilst we have information on some of the characteristics above, information is lacking on others. However, given the size of the area under consideration, it is safe to assume that all of the above groups will be represented within users of the highways and transportation network.

Question 2 – Engagement/Consultation

How have you tried to involve people/groups that are potentially affected by your decision? Please describe what engagement has taken place, with whom and when.

(Please ensure that you retain evidence of the consultation in case of any further enquiries. This includes the results of consultation or data gathering at any stage of the process)

The masterplan was the subject of public consultation from March to May 2015. As well as making the consultation documents available online and through libraries and council offices, specific stakeholder groups were approached.

Question 3 – Analysing Impact

Could your proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing any of the protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way?

It is particularly important in considering this question to get to grips with the actual practical impact on those affected. The decision-makers need to know in clear and specific terms what the impact may be and how serious, or perhaps minor, it may be – will people need to walk a few metres further to catch a bus, or to attend school? Will they be cut off altogether from vital services? The answers to such questions must be fully and frankly documented, for better or for worse, so that they can be properly evaluated when the decision is made.

The masterplan sets out our highways and transportation strategy for Lancaster district. The strategy includes all modes of transport and public realm. The strands are specifically intended to ensure that everyone, regardless of protected characteristic, can benefit from the strategy. Specific schemes will be evaluated separately for any potential impact on all groups sharing protected characteristics and the overall impact of the strategy will be monitored to ensure that no group suffers any dis-benefit.

The masterplan has the potential to improve highways and transport for a number of groups of people. Without the improvements the masterplan sets out, travel will become more difficult for all people across Lancaster; age and disability groups could face significant extra difficulties. Under this masterplan, more vulnerable travel users will benefit from better and safer transport and from a more user friendly public realm that has been designed with the needs of these groups in mind.

Question 4 – Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of your decision combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

Yes.

If Yes – please identify these.

The masterplan sets out a strategy to achieve an integrated transport system that will be open and accessible to all users. There are substantial funding requirements to achieve this. Changes to current funding regimes by central government and as currently established for developers could have an adverse effect on the development of the strategy. Age and disability groups could see a potentially greater adverse impact than other users if the strategy is limited in this way.

Question 5 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of your analysis have you changed/amended your original proposal?

The masterplan represents the most cost effective way to ensure the future success of the Lancaster area for all users and visitors. It will enable the needs of specific groups to be provided for and will therefore ensure more equitable access to transport and to public spaces.

Question 6 - Mitigation

Please set out any steps you will take to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of your decision on those sharing any particular protected characteristic. It is important here to do a genuine and realistic evaluation of the effectiveness of the mitigation contemplated. Over-optimistic and over-generalised assessments are likely to fall short of the due regard requirement.

Also consider if any mitigation might adversely affect any other groups and how this might be managed.

At this stage, no mitigation is needed. As specific schemes come forward during the life of the masterplan, they will individually be assessed for any potential negative impact and mitigation measures taken accordingly.

Question 7 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

At this point you need to weigh up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of your analysis. Please describe this assessment. It is important here to ensure that the assessment of any negative effects upon those sharing protected characteristics is full and frank. The full extent of actual adverse impacts must be acknowledged and taken into account, or the assessment will be inadequate. What is required is an honest evaluation, and not a marketing exercise. Conversely, while adverse effects should be frankly acknowledged, they need not be overstated or exaggerated. Where effects are not serious, this too should be made clear.

Any adverse effects will come during the course of the strategy as schemes are developed. It will therefore be vital to assess the impact of design work as proposals are developed further.

Question 8 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is your final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

The masterplan sets out our highways and transportation strategy for the District of Lancaster. The 3 core strands of the strategy are roads, public transport and public realm. These strands are specifically intended to ensure that everyone, regardless of protected characteristic, can benefit from the strategy.

Question 9 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

Describe what arrangements you will put in place to review and monitor the effects of your proposal.

All projects taken forward under this masterplan will be expected to demonstrate that the impact of options is being assessed during the development of final proposals. Groups sharing protected characteristics and the overall impact of the strategy will be monitored as far as possible to ensure that no group suffers any dis-benefit. We will work closely with our consultations groups to ensure that their views are part of the decision making process as the strategy is implemented.

Equality Analysis Prepared By **Lesley Sutcliffe**

Position / Role **Transport Planning Officer**

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Line Manager and / or Chief Officer **Marcus Hudson**

Decision Signed-Off By Cabinet Member / Chief Officer or SMT Member