

**ST. IVES MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY
(Report by Head of Planning Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report represents the final stage in the preparation of the Market Town Transport Strategy (MTTS) for St. Ives. It gives feedback on the public consultation conducted during January 2006 and reports on the results of the questionnaire that was distributed as part of the consultation.
- 1.2 The report also outlines the way forward and how the schemes contained within the strategy will be implemented.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Since the first Local Transport Plan (LTP) was published in 2001, a key component has been the development of a MTTS for all towns across Cambridgeshire. Within Huntingdonshire, strategies are in place for St. Neots (2001) and Huntingdon & Godmanchester (2003) with Ramsey and area expected during 2007.
- 2.2 For St. Ives, the Huntingdonshire Area Joint Committee has been endorsing the framework and principles of the formulation of the draft strategy over the past two years. To take this work forward, a joint County/District Member/Officer working party has been overseeing this work which has also included representatives of South Cambridgeshire District Council as part of the MTTS study area falls within that district.
- 2.3 In December 2005, the Hunts AJC endorsed the carrying out of a public consultation during January 2006. This included the distribution of leaflets and questionnaires to all households and businesses in the study area. The consultation also included staffed and unstaffed exhibitions, letters sent to neighbouring parish councils, major stakeholders and interest groups and the use of the County and both District Council websites inviting comment.
- 2.4 General response to the consultation was reasonably good with over 200 questionnaires received back and over 100 people visiting the staffed exhibitions. As well as taking the opportunity to comment on the questions listed, almost half of the respondents took the

opportunity to comment on specific elements of the strategy. Of those who responded, there was a representative cross-section of population in terms of age and gender.

- 2.5 Table 1 shows the level of support for the key measures contained within the draft strategy and that a majority of respondents support the proposed schemes.

Table 1 - Support for draft strategy proposals

Measures	Fully or partly support	Fully or partly oppose	No view/didn't answer
Cycling and Walking	79%	5%	15%
Public Transport	66%	19%	14%
Road safety	70%	15%	15%

- 2.6 Respondents were also asked to prioritise the proposed schemes contained in the draft strategy. The highest priority was given to safety schemes on key routes and junctions, improvements to pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities, safety schemes on residential roads, and a comprehensive cycle network. The lowest priority was given to additional cycle parking in the town.
- 2.7 In a number of cases, there were recurring themes to the comments made and these are listed as follows;
- Traffic calming on Needingworth Road will result in increased traffic on Pig Lane.
 - More bus services are needed to the surrounding villages.
 - Buses should not travel through the town centre.
 - Keep the bus station in the town centre.
 - Secure cycle parking is needed.
 - No further parking restrictions should be introduced.
 - The New Bridges/Flood Arches should be repaired rather than replaced.
 - Improvements to East Street and North Road are needed to allow easier access for pedestrians and buses.
 - Remove some disabled parking in the town centre.
 - Priority should be given to bypass traffic at the Meadow Lane roundabout.
 - The 20mph limit on Hill Rise should be during school hours only.
 - Traffic calming is needed on Pig Lane.

3. FINAL STRATEGY / IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 As well as delivering a number of local objectives and contributing towards improving the environment of the town, the final strategy will form an important part of the LTP. It contains an integrated package of combined measures that, taken together, will address the six key LTP objectives.
- 3.2 The final strategy is the result of a significant amount of study work that has identified the key transport problems facing St. Ives and developed the most appropriate schemes to address the problems. These have been prioritised to give an indication of the likely timescale for delivery of measures. The actual schemes included, and their priority order, reflect the views obtained through the consultation exercise combined together with an assessment of their deliverability.
- 3.3 The measures proposed will have positive environmental and safety benefits and improve accessibility needs of people living or working in, as well as visiting, St Ives. To maximise these benefits, it is vital that the measures are part of a package and are implemented as such. This is reflected in the prioritisation of the schemes to ensure that a balance between the modes will be achieved.
- 3.4 The strategy also aims to contribute towards other strategic objectives such as reducing social exclusion, improving health and maintaining economic vitality thereby making St. Ives a better place to live, work and visit.
- 3.5 A copy of the final strategy is attached at Annex A.
- 3.6 The Council has a financial commitment of £76K per annum for a 3-year period within the MTP between the period 2006/07 to 2008/09 to help deliver the actions contained in the strategy. As part of this year's consideration of the MTP, it will be suggested that due to the delay in the approval of this strategy, that this period be amended to cover the period 2007/08 to 2009/10. While this will have no additional financial impact on the Council at this stage, as we move towards the end of our funding commitment, it will be necessary for Cabinet to consider whether any extension to current funding levels should be considered.
- 3.7 In addition, the County Council will contribute financially through the LTP and any allocation for St. Ives will be dependant on the overall level of funding from Central Government to Cambridgeshire as part of its annual LTP settlement.
- 3.8 Finally, other sources of funding are likely to emerge through the development process with transport related S.106 contributions towards the MTTTS to mitigate the effects of future development.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The measures contained in the final strategy are the responsibility of both the District and County Council and both are making a financial commitment to the delivery of the Strategy through their Medium Term Plans. In addition, the strategy will be a key tool to secure development related contributions through the S.106 process where appropriate.
- 4.2 The Area Joint Committee endorsed the final Strategy at their meeting on 4th September 2006 and it needs to be considered by Cabinet at both Councils before it can formally be adopted as part of the LTP.
- 4.3 The timescale for the delivery of the Strategy will depend on the levels of funding available as well as through development contributions. At present, the District Council has given a financial commitment through its MTP to cover the period 2006/07 to 2008/09. It is expected that works proper will commence from April 2007 although it is clear that future funding arrangements will have to be considered post-2008/09.
- 4.4 Based on actual funding levels, the Hunts AJC will be presented with an annual programme of works for approval and subsequent design and implementation, with each scheme itself being subject to detailed design and consultation.

5. RECOMMENDATION

It is

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet formally approve the St. Ives Market Town Transport Strategy as attached at Annex A.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Local Transport Plan 2006-2011
Hunts Area Joint Committee – Agenda and Minutes

Contact Officer: **Stuart Bell. Team Leader - Transportation**
☎ (01480) 388387
E mail stuart.bell@huntsdc.gov.uk