

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2011
title: CONSULTATION ON DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN FOR LANCASHIRE
2011 – 2021
submitted by: STEWART BAILEY - DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the Council's response to a consultation paper on Lancashire transport planning policy.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – this document that is the subject of this report will have an important role in influencing many aspects of local transport within the borough and therefore has a bearing on helping make people's lives safer and healthier; enhancing the local environment and helping ensure that services are accessible to all.
- Community Objectives – The matters covered in this report will contribute to the objectives of a sustainable economy; reducing the need to travel; promoting public transport and encouraging non- motorised travel.
- Corporate Priorities – The report seeks to promote efficient local transport development.
- Other Considerations – None

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Local Transport Act 2008 requires that local transport authorities (in Ribble Valley's case this is Lancashire County Council (LCC)) produce a Local Transport Plan (or LTP). LTPs outline how the transport authority will maintain and improve transport in the area. The current LTP expires in 2011 and this consultation draft aims to develop a new LTP looking to 2021.

2.2 This consultation focuses on the LTP Strategy document, which identifies a vision for the area's transport, goals and outlines key Priorities and their associated actions. However the Priorities and actions within the Strategy will be delivered through detailed 3 year duration Implementation Plans, the first of which will run from 2011/12 to 2014/15. These Implementation Plans will contain specific projects and will be consulted upon separately once the final version of the Strategy has been approved and therefore do not form a part of this consultation. The deadline for responses is the 14th January 2011.

2.3 The consultation draft Strategy has already been informed by a variety of discussions and preliminary consultations with relevant parties and these are described in the "Outcomes from Early Consultation. November 2010" document, one of the documents that accompany the draft Strategy. Within these early consultations were informal discussions

with RVBC planning staff, which were followed up with a written response (see LTP 3 Consultation Response of 7th September in Appendix1). Within the Outcomes document (Pages 17 and 18) is a summary of these RVBC responses and, in the right hand most column, how LCC feels they have been addressed in the Strategy Priorities. These are discussed more fully in Section 4 below.

- 2.4 The Strategy document is accompanied by two other supporting documents, both of which are referenced as Background Papers in this report. The first document, “Environmental Report”, outlines the key environmental issues and impacts of the draft Strategy.
- 2.5 The second document, “List of Suggested Schemes”, the County Council wish to emphasise, is simply a preliminary list of schemes that emerged from the initial discussions and consultations on strategic matters. These preliminary suggested schemes will form part of the discussions around the future Implementation Plans mentioned above (see para 2.2). They are not an agreed list of committed and prioritised schemes and can be added to as a part of this consultation.
- 2.6 It should also be noted that this plan will not cover the Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool areas which will develop their own transport plans.

3. DETAIL OF STRATEGY DOCUMENT

3.1 **Transport Goals**

The Strategy outlines the following transport goals:

- To help to secure a strong economic future by making transport and travel into and between our major economic centres more effective and efficient and by improving links to neighbouring major economic areas and beyond;
 - To provide the public with safe and convenient access to the services, jobs, health, leisure and educational opportunities that they need;
 - To improve the accessibility, availability and affordability of transport as a contribution to the development of strong and cohesive communities;
 - To create more attractive neighbourhoods by reducing the impact of transport on our quality of life and by improving our public realm;
 - To reduce the carbon impact of Lancashire's transport requirements, whilst delivering sustainable value for money transport options to those who need them;
 - To make walking and cycling more safe, convenient and attractive, particularly in the more disadvantaged areas of Lancashire, bringing improvements in the health of Lancashire's residents
- and
- In all that we do, to provide value for money by prioritising the maintenance and improvement of Lancashire's existing transport infrastructure where it can help to deliver our transport goals.

3.2 Transport Priorities

3.2.1 Following on from the goals a set of seven priorities have been identified, stated as being derived through a combination of evidence analysis, national and local transport policy scrutiny and consultation feedback. These are outlined below, but in the early years of the Strategy the focus will be on three top priorities:

1. Supporting private sector economic growth, the creation of jobs and access to employment.
2. Investing in children's and young people's safety
- 3 Maintaining the county's current transport assets.

The bulk of the remainder of the Strategy describes the seven priorities that will operate throughout the rest of the life of the plan. These are described briefly below.

3.2.2 Improving Access into Areas of Economic Growth and Regeneration.

Consultation revealed concerns over connectivity, reducing congestion, reliability and efficiency and unlocking key employment sites.

In addressing these concerns LCC state that they will:

- Reduce congestion, increase road capacity and improve links and junctions to support the growth of Preston and Lancaster; key employment sites; regenerating town centres and other "key drivers", such as universities;
- Explore the practical renewal of outdated rural road infrastructure serving the agricultural Sector;
- Work with public sector transport operators to reduce journey times to strategic employment areas;
- Work to improve the connections between key sites both to other parts of Lancashire and to the wider North West and Yorkshire;
- Improve access to the major ports of Heysham and Fleetwood and to Blackpool Airport;
- Take the lead in promoting major infrastructure projects such as High Speed 2; electrification of key rail routes such as Blackpool to Manchester; the development of new linkages such as the Todmorden Curve and major roads to support Heysham;
- Aid town centre regeneration through bus station and interchange development;
- Introduce park and ride sites serving major employments sites and Preston and Lancaster city centres;
- and finally to promote sustainable travel options at important visitor destinations and work with District Councils to deliver adequate parking to support retail economies in town centres, whilst ensuring that public transport is a viable alternative.

The Strategy states that the geographical focus for these activities will be Preston and Lancaster city centres and a variety of strategic employment sites which includes Samlesbury. Other foci will be major town centre renewal programmes in Burnley, Rawtenstall and Skelmersdale and also, more generally “Lancashire’s visitor economy”.

3.2.3 Providing Better Access to Education and Employment

Consultation concerns emphasised the availability of public transport, congestion delays, the cost of public transport and the need to increase links between districts and key employment and education areas.

- The County Council state that they will work to provide affordable public transport to disadvantaged and isolated communities to increase the range of employment opportunities available within a 40 minute journey time. “Affordability” is seen as a weekly transport cost of £15.
- They also pledge to work with transport providers to provide more joined up and coherent public transport.
- They will promote travel plans to major employers and education establishments.
- They will also work with developers and district councils to influence locations for major new development.

These activities are stated as operating over the whole of Lancashire.

3.2.4 Improving People’s Quality of Life and Wellbeing

Consultations revealed, among other issues, a concern in rural areas over access to key services for those without private transport and concerns over the specific transport needs of older people. Also mentioned was the perception that fear of traffic deters walking and cycling. Actions here relate to:

- Traffic noise and air pollution reduction in certain areas (no RV locations are mentioned here).
- The provision of access by all groups to fresh produce and a full range of social and leisure activities, including the countryside.
- Proper physical access to health care facilities.
- The recognition of the specific transport needs of older people.
- working with district councils and others to improve the quality of neighbourhoods to enhance walking and cycling opportunities.

Most of these activities will be focused into the disadvantaged areas of the main urban centres and do not seem to target any areas in Ribble Valley. With regard to addressing the deterrence of cycling and walking due to perceived fear of traffic there will be “targeted interventions” across Lancashire.

3.2.5 Improving the Safety of our Streets for our most Vulnerable Residents

Consultations revealed specific concern over road casualties among young people within wider road safety concerns and that there is a view that the introduction of 20 mph zones across residential areas could significantly contribute to increased road safety. The County Council will:

- Roll out 20mph schemes across residential areas where they can be accommodated consistent with the free movement of the highway network
- Work with communities to implement appropriate speed limits.
- Support the enforcement of speed limit enforcement through such measures as speed cameras.
- Develop targeted initiatives relating to driver behaviour for those groups most likely to be involved in road casualty accidents.
- Work to embed safety principles into traffic management and highway maintenance activities.

Indications are that these initiatives will be focused on “at risk” areas which are “likely to be in or near to our more disadvantaged neighbourhoods”.

3.2.6 Providing Safe, Reliable, Convenient and Affordable Transport Alternatives to the Car

Consultations emphasised concerns over safety relating to walkers and cyclists and the environmental costs of motoring. The perceived cost of public transport was also emphasised, which may play a part in the reduction of services. The actions the County Council are committing to include:

- Working with transport providers to invest in new public transport services where there is a proven economic or regeneration benefit.
- Pressing operators over service quality issues such as the cleanliness and maintenance of stations and vehicles.
- Providing discount schemes for 16 to 23 year olds.
- Working with operators to introduce new Smartcard technology to allow travel across the County and ultimately further afield and across different transport modes.
- Working to develop local rail services to increase patronage and seeking targeted investment in areas where there is evidence for significant growth.
- Also the County will look to provide safe and convenient infrastructure for walking and cycling for work and leisure purposes.

The Strategy indicates that these measures will be focused on public transport services to “Lancashire’s main town and city centres for employment and education” and on congested routes in urban areas such as Lancaster and Preston.

3.2.7 Maintaining our Assets

Consultations with local councils have emphasised the need to maintain assets in good condition. Across the whole of the County's transport assets the following initiatives are to be pursued: improved pothole maintenance; improved safety measures on high accident routes; a reduction in traffic noise in residential areas; improved bridge parapet, foundation assessment and a bridge strengthening programme; the development of Surface Water Management Planning; improved lighting strategies including the use of LED technologies; improved salting management, distribution and improved public communication; better footway repair and the implementation of a new Urban Tree Strategy to reduce root damage.

3.2.8 Reducing Carbon Emissions and its Effects

Consultations revealed a "broad acceptance that carbon emissions need to be reduced". This priority applies county wide and is principally addressed through activities elsewhere in the other Strategy priorities mentioned above and includes; improving the range of sustainable transport; reducing congestion; locating new development in sustainable locations; using more energy efficient forms of street lighting and reducing the hours of its operation.

4. DISCUSSION.

4.1.1 As mentioned above, (see 2.3) RVBC officers made a response (see Appendix 1) to the initial discussions that led to this Strategy document. These discussions were held around a series of broad headings such as: local business competitiveness; supporting retail; rural isolation and others. Our response is acknowledged within the accompanying Outcomes document, in which the County Council also indicates where they think the various Strategy Priorities address the points we raised.

4.1.2 Within these discussions LCC also asked us to state what the most important strategic issues were that we would like to see addressed in the LTP. These were:

- the link between transport and local economic growth
- the link between transport and rural isolation
- road safety, in general and in relation to particular parts of the local network
- the need for flexible and demand responsive transport solutions
- the environmental impacts of transport

Below is a brief outline of our response points, the strategic issues we felt needed to be addressed (for more detail see Appendix 1) and a discussion of the relevance of the LTP Strategy Priorities to them.

4.2 Local Business Competitiveness and Local Employment Opportunities

- 4.2.1 In relation to improving the competitiveness of local businesses by safeguarding and promoting local employment opportunities, we pointed out the significant, mostly car based, inward and outward commuter flows experienced by the Borough. We mentioned that, while promoting economic growth within the Borough would help address these patterns, it was likely that there will still be a need for many residents to travel to work outside the area and many will still need to commute in to work for local firms. We specifically mentioned (see Appendix 1) that we would like to see the LTP address the issue of the relationship between transport and the growth of the local economy.
- 4.2.2 In response LCC feel that the Strategy addresses the above issues within all the bullet points within the “Improving Access into Areas of Economic Growth” Priority (see 3.2.2 above). However it is uncertain as to how specifically relevant most of these points are to Ribble Valley. The Strategy states that the focus for the activities of this Priority will be on Lancaster and Preston City Centres; strategic employment sites; town centre renewal programmes in Burnley, Rawtenstall and Skelmersdale, and Lancashire’s “visitor economy”. The only areas that would appear to specifically relate to Ribble Valley is the Samlesbury strategic employment site. The more general reference to the wider “visitor economy” could be interpreted as relating to that part of our economy and is therefore welcome.
- 4.2.3 Under Priority bullet 6 (see 3.2.2), while there is a general statement of support for major infrastructure investment, the specific illustrations or examples do not relate to Ribble Valley. For instance, the Todmorden Curve is mentioned as an illustration of a railway enhancement scheme, whereas the need to upgrade the Blackburn to Manchester line, which would benefit Ribble Valley, is not. This latter point may become a part of the Blackburn with Darwen LTP, which will be a separate document, but the content of which is unknown at present. It may also be discussed as a part of the LTP Implementation Plans mentioned in 2.2 above.
- 4.2.4 Priority bullet 10 (see 3.2.2) relating to working with district councils on the delivery of adequate parking to support strong retail economies is welcome. However the stated geographic focus of much of this Priority’s activities, including this one, does not appear to include rural market towns such as Clitheroe, unless it is assumed that this purely relates to the visitor economy in some way.
- 4.2.5 Priority bullet 9 (see 3.2.2) relates to the general promotion of sustainable travel options to important visitor destinations. This could be read as an indication of support for the wider visitor economy and Ribble Valley’s rural and heritage tourism but it is unclear what is meant by “travel options” and “important visitor destinations” in this context. This point is also referred to in 4.4.2 below.
- 4.2.6 **RECOMMENDATION:** the stated geographic foci for much of the activities within the Improving Access into Areas of Economic Growth and Regeneration Priority, apart from unspecified links to the Samlesbury strategic employment site, are not clearly stated as applying to rural areas or market towns such as Clitheroe. The only sector of the rural economy that could be seen to relate to these activities is the visitor economy. These activities should be focused more clearly on the totality of the rural economy. More clarity regarding the “travel options” in relation to the visitor economy would also be welcome.

4.3 Retail Vitality and Viability

- 4.3.1 In relation to supporting the vitality and viability of our retail offer we pointed out that a significant amount of retail spend by local residents is made through journeys outside the Borough, again mostly by car, and the need to retain more of this spend within the area. We also pointed out the relatively limited public transport options available and the need for efficient and convenient transport to help us in supporting local retail and relates again to our desire to see economic growth and transport addressed in the LTP.
- 4.3.2 LCC feels that the Strategy addresses this area within bullet point 4 of the Providing Better Access to Education and Employment Priority (see 3.2.3). This relates to LCC working with developers and district councils to influence locations for major new developments and their associated transport network to minimise the generation of car trips. The RVBC planning function already works with the County Council on a variety of transport aspects of proposed development so this bullet states the general current position. There is however no definition of “major development”.
- 4.3.3 While not mentioned specifically by LCC, it would also appear that other activities within this Priority have a relevance to Ribble Valley. Bullets 1 and 2 (see 3.2.3) relate to improving public transport to disadvantaged groups and thereby offering a viable transport alternative for both local employees and residents, both of which would benefit local retailing. These points are to be welcomed as is their stated geographic application across the whole of the county, not just its major urban areas.
- 4.3.4 It should also be mentioned that the points made above in section 4.2 above in relation to the wider economy may also apply to the viability of the retailing sector
- 4.3.5 **RECOMMENDATION** We welcome the statements within the Strategy in relation to retail viability mentioned above. However we also point to other activities within the Improving Access to Areas of Economic Growth Priority, for instance relating to possible car park provision, which may have a bearing on our rural retailing sector and which are not clearly acknowledged in the Strategy.

4.4 Sustainable Rural Tourism

- 4.4.1 With regard to supporting and developing our tourism and visitor economy we pointed out in our response the significant amount of this sector’s activity depends on car based journeys and that to develop this further could imply more car based traffic. Again this should be seen in relation to our desire to see economic growth represented in the Strategy.
- 4.4.2 LCC feels that bullet point 9 of the Improving Access to Areas of Economic Growth Priority (see 3.2.2), which relates to promoting sustainable travel options to important visitor destinations, addresses this. This point is also mentioned and discussed above in 4.2.5.
- 4.4.3 **RECOMMENDATION:** More clarity is need regarding the activity within bullet 9 of the Improving Access Priority regarding promoting sustainable travel options to important visitor destinations. Specifically what are regarded as “important visitor destinations” and what is meant by sustainable travel options in the context of rural tourism.

4.5 Accessibility and Rural Isolation

- 4.5.1 We also, in discussions relating to improving accessibility and service delivery to address rural isolation, pointed out that there are still significant numbers of local residents who find it difficult to access normal facilities such as shops and health care and rely on public transport. We also pointed out that some facilities in local villages are also under pressure because of car based retail related journeys made out of the area. We specifically mentioned rural isolation and the exploration of more demand responsive transport solutions as areas we would like to see addressed in the LTP (see 4.1.2).
- 4.5.2 In the Outcomes document LCC points to bullet point 5 of the Improving Quality of Life Priority (see 3.2.4) in the Strategy which relates to the development of “innovative schemes” to improve access as addressing our point. These “schemes” could be new provision or changing where and how a current service is delivered. Whilst this is welcome LCC go on to state that the geographic areas that this Priority will focus on relate to disadvantaged urban communities and congested parts of Lancaster and Central Lancashire. There is no mention of any focus on rural areas here. The other geographic focus mentioned relates to “targeted interventions” throughout Lancashire to alleviate the fear of traffic and stimulate more walking and cycling. While this is welcome there is no information as to how these targeted areas will be identified.
- 4.5.3 While LCC do not make this connection in their Outcomes document, many of the parts of the Providing Safe, Reliable, Convenient and Affordable Transport Alternatives Priority (see 3.2.6) could potentially address our concerns regarding isolation. These include investment in new transport services (bullet 1); improving service quality (bullet 2); providing a discount scheme (bullet 3) and developing local rail services (bullet 5). LCC states that the geographic focus for these activities will be “routes to Lancashire’s main towns and city centres for employment and education”. While this is not specifically stated this would appear to support access from our area to surrounding urban opportunities.
- 4.5.4 Equally welcome, and again not mentioned in the Outcomes document, are bullets 1 and 2 within the Providing Better Access Priority (see 3.2.3), which relate to providing affordable public transport to disadvantaged and isolated communities and providing more joined up services. Both these activities are stated as operating throughout Lancashire and therefore could apply to our concerns here.
- 4.5.5 **RECOMMENDATION:** We welcome the various supportive elements of the various Priorities mentioned above in beginning to address our concerns over rural isolation. However we would like to see clarity regarding the application of innovative schemes to improve access for rural communities to services. The stated geographical focus of this activity is stated to be particular disadvantaged communities. This would appear to preclude areas such as ours. Does this activity have a bearing in rural places such as Ribble Valley? Does it include consideration of flexible and demand responsive possibilities?

4.6 Further Points in Preliminary RVBC Response

- 4.6.1 In addition to the above points we also stated we wished to see issues relating to road safety and the environmental impacts of transport addressed within the Strategy. These have not been acknowledged in the Outcomes document but there are elements of the Strategy that do address these issues.

- 4.6.2 All the activities mentioned within the Improving the Safety of our Streets Priority (see 3.2.5) could be regarded as addressing our concerns on a strategic level. However these activities are apparently directed geographically towards “at risk” areas which are “likely to be in or near our more disadvantaged communities. It should be noted that there are elements of other priorities that are also safety related including bullet 6 of the Providing Safe, Reliable Transport Alternatives (see 3.2.6) which relates to the provision of safe and convenient infrastructure for walking and cycling. The various elements of the Maintaining Our Assets Priority (see 3.2.7) includes (bullet 3) a statement relating to improved safety measures on routes with high accident statistics in addition to various maintenance related statements.
- 4.6.3 **RECOMMENDATION:** That the targeting of the measures within the Improving Safety Priority should not preclude rural areas such as Ribble valley where there is a proven Need for action.
- 4.6.4 In relation to our concerns about the environmental impact of transport the Reducing Carbon Emissions Priority (see 3.2.8) points to the many elements within the other Strategy priorities, such as the focus on sustainable transport modes, which will deliver this priority.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – No immediate implications as a result of this report.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None.
- Political – There are no direct political implications.
- Reputation – The opportunity to make a response to consultations is important.

6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

Authorise the Director of Development Services to make a response on behalf of the Council that follows the various recommendations within Section 4 of this report.

Director of Development Services

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2021 A Draft Strategy for Lancashire. November 2010
2. Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2021 Outcomes from Early Consultation. Nov 2010
3. Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2021 Environmental Report. November 2010
4. Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2021 List of Suggested Schemes. November 2010.

For further information please ask for Phil Dagnall, extension 4570.

LTP3 Consultation - Response from Ribble Valley Borough Council (7- 9-10)

Following our meeting with Lancashire County Council staff on August 9th 2010 in which we discussed a variety of transport related issues facing the Borough as a part of a wider consultation on LTP3 please find below the following points as our consultation responses. These mainly re iterate the matters we raised at the meeting and broadly follow the questions put to us in your letter of 2nd June (your ref ENV/TP/111ASB/MH/LCH).

A. Broad Strategic Issues and Objectives.

We are currently, as of August 25th, holding a Regulation 25 consultation on our Core Strategy. It contains a series of Strategic Objectives which necessarily reflect broad priorities with Pennine Lancashire's MAA and also the Ribble Valley Sustainable Community Strategy and the Ribble Valley Economic Strategy.

Several of these Strategic Objectives are significantly influenced by and influence transport considerations, as we explained in the 9th July meeting.

The first three Objectives below reflect aspects of the local economy and their transport related implications. The remaining two relate to rural isolation and the wider sustainability benefits of genuine transport choice. We would wish to see all the transport related implications mentioned below addressed in the future LTP.

1. Improve the competitiveness and productivity of local businesses by safeguarding and promoting local employment opportunities.

Although there are no up to date figures available on local commuting patterns those that exist point to significant and increasing out commuting by Ribble Valley residents for employment outside the Borough, with Blackburn and Preston being important destinations. Over 70% of this traffic is by private transport. In addition there is also an important inward flow of people, again mostly car borne, who travel daily into the Borough to work in local businesses and this too has increased in recent years. These rates are above national averages. While improving the competitiveness of local businesses and promoting economic growth within the Borough would help address some of these travel patterns it is likely that many will still need to travel out of the area and local businesses will continue to need labour that will need to commute into the Borough. At present this is done significantly by private car.

2. Support existing retail business whilst improving the retail offer by ensuring the vitality and viability of the retail areas are considered.

Recent research has revealed that a considerable amount of shopping related spending leaks out of the Borough to surrounding areas. This affects not just the established centres such as Clitheroe but also the local village shops and post offices, some of which have recently been closed for postal services. This mainly car borne flow adds to the already considerable amount of out commuting for employment mentioned above. Given the relatively limited public transport options currently available this trend could continue into the future. Retaining more of this local spending power within the Borough will be important in sustaining our local centres and efficient and convenient transport has a part to play in this.

3. Co –ordinate, innovate and diversify sustainable rural tourism, building on our strengths and developing new initiatives.

As a predominantly rural Borough with significant areas of attractive countryside, some designated within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, there is much to attract visitors to the area both for short and long stays. There were 2.7 million tourist days spent in the area in 2006. Again, though there are no exact figures available, it is probable that much of this was by private car to a wide variety of sometimes relatively isolated attractions. There are good examples of successful public transport based initiatives, such as the Dales Rail service along the Ribble Valley line connecting to the scenic Settle and Carlisle route. However, given the current levels of public transport diversifying the area's economy further into sustainable tourism could imply the generation of significantly more car based traffic both to and within the area.

4. Improve accessibility and service delivery to address rural isolation

As a rural Borough physical access to all the normal services those in more metropolitan areas may take for granted is a real issue. There are significant numbers of people even within an affluent Borough who have little or no access to a car and rely on rural bus services. In addition local shops and post offices in the more rural parts of the Borough are under pressure with much shopping done by more mobile residents outside the area, as mentioned above. Restricted transport options will contribute to increased isolation and threaten local services.

5. Contribute to local, regional and wider sustainable development

The Borough is aware of both the local and wider benefits of locating development to reduce car use, including environmental benefits such as improved air quality, and the importance of giving local residents a genuine choice of transport options.

B. Transport Related Priority Measures.

As outlined above the Borough faces increasing levels of car based travel for employment, shopping, tourism and other reasons if current trends continue into the future. This would imply more congestion and pollution, more noise and road safety issues on some local roads. Also there are more hidden but nevertheless real issues of lack of opportunity for those residents who do not currently have access to a car to access services, look for work or travel to access training opportunities or simply travel to use vital facilities such as hospitals. These problems will only increase if other travel options are not available. Current housing growth predictions also carry implications for future travel demand. As priorities both local rail and bus services should be enhanced to offer more sustainable options to reduce this potential increase in private car journeys.

1. Rail Related Priority Measures.

The Borough's rail stations have seen increasing patronage over recent years and local infrastructure has recently been upgraded, opening up the potential for both more passenger services and more freight capacity. This in turn offers an opportunity to take more freight off local roads and carry more currently car based commuting by rail and better connect the Borough to training and job opportunities in Blackburn, Preston and further afield in the Greater

Manchester area. It also offers a more sustainable mode of travel for off peak shopping travel and more sustainable tourism based travel into the Borough if well coordinated with bus transport.

The Council remains committed to supporting initiatives aimed at improving current rail services and extending them to provide regular half hourly passenger services throughout the day through to Blackburn and on to both Manchester and Preston. Also it continues to protect from inappropriate development potential future rail station sites at Chatburn and Gisburn.

This support is outlined in some detail in Appendix 1 to this document in the form of a recent Report to Lancashire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2010. The report also draws out the connections between the delivery of this initiative and the fulfilment of other strategy objectives. (Please note that the Appendix 1 document (ie the appendix to 7-9-10 response is not included with this Report to Planning and Development of 13-1-11)

2. Bus Transport

As mentioned above, in a large and predominantly rural Borough those without access to a car are at risk of isolation from everyday services, and educational, training and work opportunities. The continued delivery of reliable, regular, convenient and accessible rural bus services which co ordinate with other travel modes is therefore vital to many of our residents.

On a wider level rural bus services can help deliver more sustainable tourism for visitors as evidenced in the successful co ordination of bus and rail in the established Dales Rail service.

3. Community Transport

Mainstream scheduled bus and rail based travel opportunities in a large rural Borough can still leave some individuals and areas with a very restricted service. Within the Borough the Little Green Bus initiative gives a valuable flexible demand- responsive option that can help to fill in the gaps between scheduled services. We support this locally based transport solution and would be concerned if this service were to be threatened.

C. Local Road Safety Issues.

Road safety within the Borough is an important local issue and is a strategic objective within the current Sustainable Community Strategy. There continues to be concern over levels of accidents on certain sections of the Borough's roads including, but not limited to, the A59(T) east of Clitheroe and further north towards Gisburn. The authority will continue to press for safety improvements to those areas it considers dangerous and well as seeking a continuing level of adequate maintenance of roads and bridges in the Borough and the lighting of busy trunk roads.

D. Most important strategic issues to be addressed within the next LTP

1. The relationship between transport and the local economy, in particular how local transport can be improved to support the growth and development of the local economy in its widest sense.
2. That transport helps to address issues of rural and social isolation

3. Road safety within the Borough, both in terms of the quality of on going maintenance and the improvement of particular sections of some local roads
4. That more flexible and demand responsive transport solutions be further explored
5. That transport be addressed in terms of reducing its environmental impacts including air pollution, noise and congestion.