

Warrington Draft Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

Sustainability Appraisal

Post Adoption Statement

December, 2019

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1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Sustainability appraisal (SA) is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a draft plan, and reasonable alternatives; with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising the positives before the Plan is finalised.
- 1.1.2 This document is Post – Adoption Statement for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the fourth Warrington Local Transport Plan (LTP4). The SEA statement describes the process, how the findings of the SEA were taken into account and informed the development of the LTP4, and the monitoring indicators that will be applied to check the accuracy of predicted effects and to monitor progress against sustainability objectives.
- 1.1.3 A parallel process of SEA was undertaken alongside plan-making. AECOM was commissioned to support Warrington Borough Council in undertaking the SEA process.
- 1.1.4 It is a requirement that SEA involves a series of procedural steps. The final step in the process involves preparing a 'statement' at the time of plan adoption.
- 1.1.5 The aim of the SEA Statement (i.e. this document) is to present –
1. The 'story' of plan-making / SEA up to the point of adoption
Specifically, the Regulations¹ explain that there is a need to: "summarise how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme and how the environmental report... the opinions expressed... and the results of consultations... have been taken into account... and the reasons for choosing the plan... as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with."
 2. Measures decided concerning the monitoring of plan implementation.
- 1.1.6 This Statement considers (1) and (2) in turn.

¹ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004)

2 The Plan making 'story'

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This section gives consideration to each of the main transport plan-making / SEA steps in turn. It is typical for the transport plan-making / SEA process to involve numerous iterations of a draft Plan, and this was the case with the Warrington LTP4.

2.2 SA Preparation alongside the Local Plan

- 2.2.1 This section outlines the key outputs from the SA process and how they related to the preparation of the LTP4

SEA Scoping Report (July – August 2018)

- 2.2.2 The first stage of the SEA process for the LTP4 was to prepare and consult on the scoping report. The report identified key issues to be a focus of the SEA and established an appraisal framework.

- 2.2.3 The Statutory Consultation Bodies English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency were each consulted with, and comments received were taken into consideration when finalising the scoping report.

SEA Report (March 2018)

- 2.2.4 The SEA Report accompanied the LTP4 in the consultation draft phase.
- 2.2.5 The SEA Report at this stage set out an appraisal of the sustainability implications of the draft LTP4, and captured how the SEA process had influenced the development of the Plan.

SEA Report Update (September 2019)

- 2.2.6 Updates to the SEA report were made in September 2019 to reflect any changes that were made to the LTP4 following consultation on the draft Plan.

3 How has the SEA influenced decision making?

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Essentially, SEA must feed-into and inform plan-making in two ways:

1. Appraisal of sustainable transport options and draft policies should inform preparation of the draft plan.
2. The SEA Report, and consultation responses received during the Draft Plan / SA Report consultation, should inform plan finalisation.

3.1.2 This section briefly discusses the key elements of the SEA process, and how the findings were fed-into the Plan making process. There is a focus on explaining how sustainability have been taken into account and influenced plan-making, including as a result of alternatives appraisal, site assessments, policy appraisal, and consultation on Plan / SEA documents.

3.2 Influencing strategic options

3.2.1 The SEA identified and appraised three strategic transport options, which have informed the development of the Strategic Transport Plan. These are as follows:

- Option 1: Traffic management and Sustainable travel
- Option 2: Traffic management, Sustainable travel + Mass Transit
- Option 3: Great focus on Sustainable modes of transport only

3.2.2 The SEA found that Option 2 generates the most significant positive effects overall. In particular, this option best supports economic growth and housing development, which are crucial elements of the emerging Local Plan for Warrington. This option is also most positive in terms of improving accessibility for a wider range of communities and achieving improvements in air quality and contributing to climate change mitigation.

3.3 Influencing policy content

3.3.1 The SEA assessed the implications of each of the draft Policies in the LTP4, and a series of recommendations were made for mitigation and enhancement. These were taken into account when the LTP4 was being finalised.

3.4 Inputs from consultation

3.4.1 Consultation on the SEA Report took place alongside the draft fourth Local Transport Plan for nine weeks, starting on the 15th of April 2019 and closing on the 17th June 2019. A summary of key responses relevant to the SEA is provided below.

- **English Heritage** had no detailed comments to make on the SEA Report.
- **Highways England** considers that an appropriate level of assessment has been carried out to support the current stage in the development process of the LTP4.
- **Natural England** had no detailed comments to make on the SEA Report itself.
- **The Environment Agency** had no detailed comments to make on the SEA Report itself.

4 Monitoring

4.1.1 There is a need to set out the monitoring measures that will be used to monitor the effects of the Local Plan, and whether these correlate to those identified in the SEA Report. Monitoring also allows for unforeseen effects to be identified early, and to help understand why predicted positive or negative effects might not be occurring in reality.

4.1.2 The following table sets out the monitoring indicators against each of the SEA themes presented in the SEA Report. These indicators are unchanged from those identified in the final (updated) SEA Report.

Table 4.1. Sustainability Theme and Monitoring Measures

Sustainability Theme	Monitoring Measures
Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Net loss of any extent of a nationally or locally designated biodiversity or geodiversity asset arising from development that is permitted.• Loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (ha) as a % of total resources
Built and natural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas on 'At Risk' registers.• Net additional convenience and comparison retail floor space provided at Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Broughton Astley.

Sustainability Theme	Monitoring Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design standard achieved (of 10 randomly selected major developments) against Building for Life criteria.
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of major housing developments with efficient, easy and affordable access to key services (employment, education, health care and food shopping) by public transport.
Resilience to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of major development proposals supported by Design and Access Statements that fully cover climate change requirements.
Housing and economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of housing delivered. • Progress against housing trajectory. • A five year deliverable supply of housing land. • Net additional floor space provided.
Resource use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of housing and commercial development and associated infrastructure in Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Fleckney. • Installed capacity of wind energy schemes.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1.1 This SEA Adoption Statement demonstrates that a robust SEA process has been progressed alongside plan-making, with appraisal findings feeding-in to decision-making at numerous junctures and consultation being undertaken as necessary.

