

Winchelsea Town Plan Traffic & Transport Working Group (TTWG)

September 11th 2004

Transport Planning Group
Transport & Environment Department
East Sussex County Council
(Ref:D3-JAW)
FREEPOST LEWES
BN7 1BR

Dear Sir/Madam

LTP2 Consultation Questionnaire

Please find enclosed a copy of your consultation questionnaire, completed by myself on behalf of the Traffic and Transport Working Group of the Winchelsea Town Plan [Steering Committee](#). As noted at the end of the questionnaire, our responses are from the perspective of small towns/villages in East Sussex, rather than a County-wide/urbanised areas view. Also enclosed is a copy of our working group's Terms of Reference, in line with the recent Countryside Agency recommendations for the preparation of Town/Village/Parish Plans. The first and last Action Items relate directly to the LTP2 process.

Overall, we support and commend the broad directions that ESCC are proposing to pursue, as outlined in the Key Issues document, and as can be seen by the list of key initial Action Areas in our Terms of Reference document. Top of our list are issues relating to road safety and what might be described as 'quiet enjoyment' of rural areas and small town/village roads and paths. We appreciate that this is an area with limited funding at present, but it does attract very strong opinions, even where KSI statistics fail to identify a problem in the government's current terms.

Below are some specific points raised by members of our Committee, a number of which address points not covered directly in the "Key Issues" document, which we hope will be a useful contribution to your forward planning process. Many thanks for inviting us to contribute to the consultation process – our Group would be happy to discuss such issues directly with your team at any time if you so wish.

Yours sincerely

Michael J de Smith
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LTP2: Key Issues – A Winchelsea Perspective

1. **Improving pedestrian facilities** should include more pedestrianisation of town and village centres, including access (Safe Routes) into and out of such towns and villages, and improvements to/addition of safe crossing points. We vigorously support home zones and quiet lanes. The LTP should recognise that accident statistics are not the only pedestrian concern. Changes that result in less 'intimidation' by cars and commercial vehicles to improve the quality of life in villages and surrounding rural areas is vital.
2. **Review of selected road routes:** LTP2 does not appear to cover the needs of communities where the existence of an alternative through route within the town parallel to the trunk road seems is a key issue (as is the case for Winchelsea) – such situations encourage/lead to rat running and racing. We would also welcome clarification on the timing of any review of the 'underperforming' South Coast route (A259 section) in respect of any possible impact on the Icklesham/Winchelsea/Rye section.
3. **Speed control measures:** Greater police enforcement would be a very popular speed control measure. Increased use of pinch points and speed sensitive signage and/or cameras (subject to the broader concerns outlined below, item 8) would also be widely welcomed. High speed motorcycles are amongst the greatest sources of concern, both from a safety and noise perspective.
4. **Community transport schemes**, e.g. Rye and Battle. These are invaluable but appear to have lost some or all of their funding. They provide a fantastic service.
5. **School buses and pedestrian/cycle safe routes to schools** should be a central and active part of the planning process, as trips to school account for a large percentage of morning and afternoon traffic, with all its undesirable affects.
6. The **rail links to London** are a key transport service in our area. The Council needs to press for safer trains (not so much violence as intimidation by yobs), cleaner trains and more reliable trains, and more frequent services. Many of the trains have become unpleasant to use. The Marsh Link is becoming better as new trains are introduced, and will be better still when there are 3 new style trains rather than 2 in operation. The lack of linkage of the timetable with London-Ashford trains, partly a function of the low frequency of the trains, especially in the Hastings direction in the afternoon/evening, is a major disincentive to use of the service, which needs constant pressure to resolve
7. **Cycling:** The NCN programme is very poor in our area. Take the Winchelsea-Rye route. It goes via Udimore and is no good for residents wanting to cycle to Rye to shop or visit the dentist, etc, It is designed for tourists who may drive down with bikes on the back of cars. Yet, the LTP complains there is less use of cycles. We need *working* cyclepaths not just *recreational* ones. It is also pointless to mark out cycle paths on roads if these stop suddenly when the road narrows (see the cyclepath on White Hart Hill). Such paths also need to

be maintained or their use will diminish rapidly and the considerable expense involved in their creation will have been wasted.

8. Although **Environmental Impact** is one of the shared priorities, environmental issues do not figure explicitly. There is no specific national core indicator (e.g. pollution levels). There is also no mention anywhere in the document of the Councils' duty to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. It is assumed that encouraging switching from cars to train, cycle, etc, is enough. However, there are other environmental issues: **sensitive road planning** (not building through irreplaceable natural resources like SSSIs and ancient woodland) and **reducing** the blight on the countryside of **excessive street furniture and signage by rationalisation** (some of which has been increased by the NCN programme) – this latter item is the subject of a new major campaign by CPRE
9. We are not in favour of **street lighting in the countryside** and anywhere else except in danger hotspots.
10. We would like to see **more LATS**, not just for small towns, but sensitive historic 'villages' (like Winchelsea). This could be stand-alone or as an extension to a larger, nearby LATS (in our case, as an *addition* to the Rye LATS). The TTWG for Winchelsea is in a position to produce a draft of such a document, so does not necessarily require any substantial input from ESCC. Other very small towns and villages could, no doubt, do likewise. We would be happy to be a test case for such an exercise if this were acceptable to ESCC.

TTWG Terms of Reference

Purpose

The TTWG is concerned with providing input on all matters relating to Traffic and Transport to the Winchelsea Town Plan Steering Committee. The TTWG recognises that safety and the improvement in the quality of life (i.e. reduction of noise, 'intimidation' of pedestrians, pollution and other nuisances) are of central concern to residents of Winchelsea and have identified a number of initial Action Plan items warranting early consultation and analysis.

These are summarised below

Key action plan items

What	Provide input to the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Local Transport Plan for 2006-2011 (LTP2)
Why	The ESCC LTP2 programme is the basis for ESCC strategy in this field for the next 5 year period and the basis for their funding
Who	Mike de Smith (coordinator) for all TTWG members
When	by 17 th Sept 2004 (date set by ESCC)
How	Completion of ESCC Questionnaire(s) asking for comments on their "Issues Document" (undated, but PDF created 22/7/04)

What	Traffic and safety: Address problems relating to the speed and volume of traffic within the town and on the A259
Why	For the safety and wellbeing of pedestrians (especially children, the elderly and disabled), cyclists and riders; to reduce noise pollution
Who	All TTWG members, coordinated by Richard Comotto
When	conducting consultations, collecting historic data, and conducting traffic measurements during the period to 31/3/05; analysing and proposing solutions by 1/9/05; seeking to have all approved solutions in place or underway (being considered) by end 2005
How	Measurement of traffic; collation of published data and research; consultation programme; Costs associated with these activities may be significant and will be determined during the consultation phase.

What	Safe routes – to include safe routes to school, cycle and footpaths, quiet lanes and bridleways
Why	to improve non-motor access to the town, especially for getting to and from the school and town amenities and visitor attractions; to facilitate safe pedestrian access to and from the station; to improve the quality and safety of routes in and around the town
Who	All TTWG members, coordinated by Katherine Manning and Teresa McMullin
When	Consulation and analysis by 31/3/05; Recommendations by 1/9/05
How	Consulation programmes. Minimal cost envisaged for research.

What	Improved local transport facilities:
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Why	Bus and rail frequencies and transport service integration are perceived to be inadequate, resulting in greater use of car journeys; other issues to be identified during consultation programme
Who	All TTWG members, coordinated by Mike de Smith
When	Consultation by 31/3/05, analysis and recommendations by 1/9/05
How	Included within wider consultation programme; including interviews with existing and prospective service users. Minimal cost

What	Strategic issues – including examination of possible re-emergence of bypass proposals, development of parking facilities (temporary and permanent); examination of longer term changes to local businesses and services (especially NT and the School) that may affect traffic and transport strategy
Why	To ensure that a focus on short-term issues does not overshadow longer term considerations, some of which may become short-term issues unexpectedly
Who	All TTWG members, coordinated by Martin Hogg
When	By end 2005; time horizon of many of these issues will be 5+ years (i.e. at or beyond the new 2006-2011 ESCC Local Transport Plan)
How	Consultation programme; re-examination of past proposals and analysis of present and prospective longer-term issues. Cost is expected to be minimal

What	Winchelsea Local Transport Strategy – development of a Local Transport Strategy document for Winchelsea, along the lines of the document recently produced for the Rye area by ESCC.
Why	(i) as a direct input into the overall Winchelsea Town Plan; (ii) as a stand-alone document designed to promote the proposed Strategy and to become adopted by ESCC under their Small towns programmes
Who	All TTWG members, coordinated by Mike de Smith
When	By end 2005
How	This is essentially a consolidation exercise, building upon the various Action Plan initiatives above, extensive desk/data research and reporting; costs of research, preparation and production are expected to be minimal unless ESCC requires involvement of external consultants