

Winchelsea Town Plan: Traffic and Transport Working Group

This note is designed to be read in conjunction with the TTWG minutes #1 and the separate draft document on a proposed Data Collection Framework

Description	Notes on TTWG data requirements and consultation needs
Intended audience:	TTWG members
File name:	Working Paper on Data Requirements & Consultation Needs.doc
Version/status	V1.0
Author/source	M J de Smith
Date/time	24/08/2004
Spatial reference	n.a.
Copyright/privacy	SC

Overview

In our meeting held on 13/8/04 we identified an immediate objective for the TTWG to

“prepare input for the Steering Committee (SC) for use in the programme of public and agency consultation to be conducted”.

This work is to be drafted by 1/10/04 if possible, under the headings: 1. Speed and volume of traffic (RC); 2. Safe routes (KM and TM); 3. Transport (MJDS) and 4. Longer term issues (MH).

Since there will be commonality amongst the sets of information that we need to collect, within the TTWG and other WGs, it seems sensible to establish a framework for this information gathering process. The draft Data Collection Framework document seeks to do this within the broad scope of what we are doing, whilst this note seeks to look at the specifics for TTWG. Since I have responsibility for producing input on Transport issues, I concentrate on this latter area in particular in this note.

RC has made the excellent suggestion that we look at the recently produced Rye Local Area Transport Strategy (RLATS) document as a model for our work, and in particular, that we consider producing a similar document ourselves. This certainly simplifies some aspects of our task, would be well received by ESCC and others, and it would appear to be a practical proposition. A copy of the RLATS document can be downloaded as a Word document (c. 3Mbytes) from :

<http://www.eastsussexcc.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/localtransportplan/rye/download23.htm>

or we have a printed copy and a copy already downloaded for anyone who wants it.

An extract from the ESCC web site describes the plan as follows:

Traffic and transport in Rye

We have developed plans for improving traffic and transport in and around Rye in partnership with Rye Town Council, Playden, Icklesham and Rye Foreign Parish Councils and Rother

District Council. The strategy is guided by the vision to make Rye a safer, healthier, pleasanter and more vibrant place to live in, work in and visit, now and for the future.

Our aims

We are going to improve facilities for all road users, but in particular for pedestrians, people with mobility difficulties, public transport users and other vulnerable road users. We will do this as part of the small towns package in our Local Transport Plan.

We aim to:

- improve the economy of Rye
- increase sustainable travel choices
- improve the health of the local community
- give residents a better quality of life
- enhance the urban and environmental heritage
- improve links to surrounding communities
- introduce transport measures which give priority to pedestrians and bus, train and taxi users.

What we plan to do

- Create safe pedestrian and cycle routes.
- Focus on safety issues involving conflict between vehicles and pedestrians or cyclists.
- Improve transport for people with mobility needs.
- Improve setting-down arrangements for coach visitors.
- Reduce the impact of traffic in the town centre.
- Reduce the number of vehicles circulating the town in search of parking.
- Seek to offer more frequent and convenient bus services.
- Press for a faster, cheaper and more comfortable train service.

Most of these aims and plans apply equally to Winchelsea, and indeed many of them directly link to Winchelsea, although we will have slightly different emphases and, I suspect, a greater focus on traffic and safety issues.

The plan itself states the following:

A Local Area Transport Strategy is a set of policies and proposals for transport related issues in a particular geographical area, which has sustainability as a core objective and which balances economic, social and environmental considerations. The Strategy aims to reconcile all modes of travel and competing demands for the movement of people and goods, in a way that best meets local needs.

This document has been developed to facilitate work under the 'Small Towns Package' in the East Sussex Local Transport Plan (LTP). It aims to establish a framework within which to improve transport for the people of Rye over the period to 2012, to respond to the needs of residents, business and visitors, and enable the town's economy to flourish. The Strategy takes a realistic approach in its objectives, and aims not to give rise to unachievable expectations of what can be accomplished.

Its purpose is to identify transport improvements in Rye, which complement local planning policies, support future developments in the town, and which have widespread local support. This will be achieved through a vision, key principles and objectives that help to focus attention on what sort of place the people of Rye want the town to be. The Strategy will be a means of securing funding for prioritised measures intended to achieve the vision for the town.

The Key Principles

The Strategy will identify measures that will achieve the vision. The key principles of the Strategy embrace the concept of encouraging a change to more sustainable modes of transport (modal change) through providing more travel choices, and may be stated as:

- To provide an environment which encourages economic vitality
- To increase sustainable travel choices
- To improve the health of the whole community
- To enable full participation in the life of the town

- To enhance the quality of life for residents
- To enhance the urban and environmental heritage
- To improve links to surrounding communities
- To provide transport measures in the following priority order:
 1. Pedestrians
 2. Bus, train and taxi users
 3. People with reduced mobility
 4. Cyclists
 5. Shop office and factory deliveries
 6. Car-borne shoppers
 7. Car commuters and long stay visitors

Again, this background and set of principles would appear to accord with the aims of the TTWG part of the proposed Winchelsea Town Plan. This will be an item for us to consider at our next WG meeting.

The Rye document includes detailed information and conclusions of relevance to our group, including notably the following two extracts:

The study report ...[the South Coast Multi-modal Study, SoCoMMS] ... acknowledges the existing problems presented by the A259 east of Hastings in that it is too narrow in places and traffic affects Rye and other towns, creating safety and environmental problems. The study envisages that it will continue to be the main east-west route for road traffic for the foreseeable future; development at Ashford and the demand for travel to and from Hastings would be catered for by improved public transport. Its statement that no road improvements are necessary east of Hastings should be challenged. In particular, Winchelsea and Rye need traffic removed, and sections of the A259 need widening and safety improvements.

and:

Schemes and measures on the [A259] trunk road fall within the jurisdiction of the Highways Agency. As the SoCoMMS report has stated, improvements are required on the A259 in and near Rye, to deal with its local inadequacies, including safety, environmental and operational issues. There are a number of recommended aspirations for the A259, supported by this Strategy:

- To improve the A259 in Rye and to the east and west of Rye
- To improve pedestrian safety on the trunk road
- To implement new pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities on key desire lines
- To give pedestrians alternative routes, avoiding the A259
- To seek a strategy should Winchelsea Hill need to be closed for repair
- Overcome bottlenecks on the trunk road, such as Monkbretton Bridge

A bypass has been proposed in the past, but there are no current intentions to construct one. Environmental and cost considerations are the two main constraints against a bypass

TTWG input to SC

When considering the extent of consultation required for my area, item 3. Transport, I have focused on four groups that I think we would want to consult with:

1. Suppliers of services (the supply side)
2. Customers of services (the demand side)
3. Regulators and related bodies
4. Other interested parties (e.g. National Trust)

For my purposes I am excluding pedestrians/walkers, cyclists and horse riders, all of whom I am assuming will be covered by the Safe Routes team.

These groups will almost all be the subject of research and consultation by other parts of the TTWG and other WGs. In the case of transport, specific attention must be paid to Accessibility, as laid out in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Section 50 Part V deals with Public Transport but other sections deal with issues such as access to shops etc. which are of relevance to other WGs). Details are available online at:

<http://www.legislation.hmsso.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm>

Each of the four groups noted above can be subdivided as follows:

1. Suppliers:
 - a. Personal and group transport
 - i. scheduled bus services: 711 Stagecoach, S11 Rambler
 - ii. local bus/minibus services: Rye Community District Transport, Dial-a-Ride; Age Concern
 - iii. coach services: local firms and visitors (as per Rye?)
 - iv. taxis: Local firms, especially those based in Rye and Hastings
 - v. train services: South Eastern, Network Rail, Marsh Link Action Group
 - b. Goods transport
 - i. deliveries
 - ii. removals
 - iii. trades
 - iv. utilities (including street cleaning and rubbish collection)
 - c. Emergency services
 - i. police
 - ii. fire
 - iii. ambulance
2. Customers:
 - a. Residents - journeys
 - i. to work
 - ii. to shop
 - iii. to schools
 - iv. to local amenities (including the beaches and land surrounding the town, and places/venues of interest to younger children and teenagers as well as those visited by adults)
 - v. to specialist services (e.g. doctors, dentists, hospitals)
 - vi. transport issues of particular application/relevance to weekender/part-time residents
 - b. Local School - journeys
 - i. to and from the school by pupils and parents
 - ii. to and from the school by staff
 - c. Visitors (tourists and others)
 - i. by mode of transport
 - ii. day and duration of visits
 - iii. seasonality
 - iv. places visited
 - v. origin
 - d. Event organisers and clubs
 - i. Sports clubs (e.g. cricket, tennis etc)

- ii. Spring and summer shows
 - iii. Events in the Court Hall and New Hall
 - iv. and many other such groups...
 - e. Churches
 - i. St Thomas'
 - ii. Wesleyans
 - f. Businesses
 - i. their customers
 - ii. their marketing/target customers
 - iii. their suppliers
- 3. Regulators and related bodies
 - a. ESCC – transport and highways
 - b. Police (traffic and road safety)
 - c. Rother District Council
 - d. Icklesham Parish Council
 - e. Highways Agency
 - f. Rye Partnership
- 4. Other interested parties
 - a. National Trust
 - b. Other farm and woodland owners
 - c. Corporation of Winchelsea

For the purposes of conducting surveys of individuals, the Customers group is the one which may require the most care and attention. It is also the principal group that can identify the shortcomings of existing services and aspirations of local people for the future. The Suppliers group is, to an extent, a limited set reflecting current service provision.

In addition to the more direct, factual questions that may be asked, information on less factual topics must be sought (questions, suggestions etc, depending on the consultation and research approaches adopted by the SC). These include views on adequacy of existing transport facilities, now and over the three main time periods we are concerned with, mode switching (e.g. factors that might encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling), mode substitution (including use and availability of better telecommunications and associated community facilities), with especial emphasis on cost, time, convenience, environmental and safety factors. As can be seen from the many different groups involved, we will wish to ask a wide range of questions and opinions from a broad group of interested parties. This will include street surveys of people visiting the town, whether they be tourists, non-resident churchgoers, visiting club members or those waiting at the bus stop.

Depending on the views of the SC, having consolidated input from the various Working Groups, a detailed list of 'questions' relating to Transport can be drawn up. This may be an iterative process – initial opinion surveys and suggestions will identify areas that will require closer examination. In addition, there will be a need from some pure 'data gathering' exercises, which may well tie up with traffic surveying needs (e.g. counts of various types of vehicles, including vans and HGVs) in and around the town.