

Charnwood Local Plan – Post Hearing Consultation Response

Anstey Parish Council

Anstey Parish Council consider the Draft Transport Strategy consultation at its meeting on the 7th November 2023 and **RESOLVED** the following response.

At the earlier examination it was identified that there are particular issues relating to impact housing allocation in and around Anstey.

The Council welcome the inspectors request for further information on the transport strategy, however, we do not feel that exam 75 draft transport strategy resolves the issues previously outlined during the examination as follows:

Exam 75: Draft Transport Strategy

What is the purpose of the document?

The purpose of the Draft Transport Strategy sets out the broad contents of, and the framework for, Transport Strategies for Loughborough and Shepshed, the North of Leicester (which includes Anstey) and the Soar Valley. These Strategies are intended to underpin the delivery of the new Charnwood Local Plan 2021 to 2037. The primary purpose of the overall package (and hence, by extension the Strategies) is to seek to mitigate so far as is reasonably possible the cumulative impacts of growth within the Borough of Charnwood, such impacts arising within the Borough or over the boundary in neighbouring authority areas (cross-boundary impacts). The cross-boundary dimension will be especially strong in respect of the North of Leicester Transport Strategy, given the sensitivities of the transport network in this area identified throughout the evidence building process and noting the growth proposed within this area through the City of Leicester's emerging Local Plan. The principal basis of the overall package of Local Plan/Borough wide highways and transport measures mitigation is firstly to seek to reduce overall levels of carborne trips through maximising sustainable travel opportunities, and then to seek to focus remaining traffic on the highest class and/or 'most appropriate' routes available.

- Enhancing sustainable transport measures across the Borough, including cycling, walking and wheeling³ (active travel) and passenger transport.
- Targeted improvements to the Major Road Network (MRN).
- Targeted improvements to the Strategic Road Network (SRN)

Developing the measures – Cycling, Walking and Wheeling (active travel) - Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)

The plans for the North of Leicester area (including Anstey) are vague and are co-dependent on the City of Leicester's plan.

4.3.6. North of Leicester Area LCWIP (see Figures 3-3.2). This document is at an earlier stage of development. Initial evidence work has been undertaken to identify draft networks and they have been subject to initial key stakeholder and public engagement exercises.

4.3.7. This area in particular is where evidence shows cumulative and cross boundary impacts, both from growth in the Borough of Charnwood impacting on adjoining areas, such as the City of Leicester, and vice-versa. We are therefore working closely with Leicester City Council to ensure that this LCWIP aligns with the

projects that it has been and is continuing to deliver in the north-west area of the City, especially those funded by Transforming Cities Fund monies. In that way, the intention is to deliver a seamless ('boundary blind') network that supports sustainable growth across this area.

4.3.8. This LCWIP is due to be presented to the County Council's Cabinet for approval in early 2024.

The Document acknowledges that the plans will not work without a change in behaviour. There is no supporting evidence to show how this change in behaviour will be tackled.

2.3. Considering the growth requirements of Charnwood and the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (LLHMA) as a whole, as well as supporting and related evidence (including work currently being undertaken to inform the development of the County Council's next Local Transport Plan (LTP4)), all points to one fundamental conclusion. The County Council cannot 'prevent' growth, so unless significant changes occur in societal behaviours and expectations, there are significant limitations as to the extent to which the impacts of growth on the County's transportation system can be mitigated in the future. The LLHMA will not be unique in this regard, given that levels of transport congestion are already more acute in other parts of the country, especially in the south east.

2.4. Significant changes in people's behaviour will be required if the impacts of growth on the County's transportation system (and on carbon levels) are to be lessened significantly.

Developing the measures – passenger transport

In autumn 2021 the first Leicestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was published and in spring 2022 the Leicestershire Enhanced Bus Partnership came into being in line with the mandated Government timelines. BSIPs are now the route via which capital funding is awarded from Government for measures such as bus lanes or upgrades to bus stops and shelters.

Revenue funding can also be secured to support bus services that do not operate on a commercial basis (i.e., are not quite profitable enough for operators to run, but still provide value for money in the transport offer for high priority journeys they provide to communities, and therefore warrant subsidy support under the Council's Passenger Transport.

Patronage on local bus services across the Leicestershire network remains at approximately 80% of pre-Covid levels. Patronage on Park & Ride services for the first half of financial year 2022/23 was just under a third (37%) of the figure for the same period in 2019/20, as a result of changing travel to work behaviour and the greater availability of city centre parking in Leicester. Concessionary patronage is around 62% of pre-pandemic levels.

Accordingly, some operators have curtailed the routes of certain commercial services in the wake of reduced passenger numbers and driver shortages. Others have removed services which were partially supported by the County Council. Against this backdrop ever greater uncertainties arise from seeking to secure one-off developer contributions towards site specific bus services; **the risks that those**

services will cease to operate as and when the developer funding ends have increased markedly.

Developing the measures – highway improvements. The evidential work to date identifies ten specific highway improvement schemes on the MRN and SRN.

One of these is Scheme 7 - **“A46 & A50 The Brantings Interchange Scheme”**

This scheme proposes changes to the roundabout and slip roads of this junction. **This does not include any changes to the A50/Anstey Lane (Groby Road) junction.**

Summary:

- Exam 75: Draft Transport Strategy contains insufficient detail to make any assessment of the impact of the additional housing allocation on the village of Anstey.
- The Strategic Road Network plan for the Brantings interchange will not provide any relief for the traffic going into Anstey village centre. A new junction on/off the A50 to serve Anstey is required if this is a serious proposition.
- There is no breakdown for Anstey regarding the funding for the Walking, Cycling and wheeling infrastructure. This is lumped in with North Leicester. This level of detail regarding funding must be available for each village if confidence in the plan is to be gained.
- The North Leicester’s transport plan is co-dependent on the City of Leicester’s transport strategy, for which we have no detail. We need at least some detail to try to assess if the joint plans affecting Anstey will help deliver a workable transport solution.
- The leap of faith that Charnwood Borough Council has put into making this strategic transport plan work is worrying. There needs to be a plausible plan for addressing the changes in behaviour to make it work.
- How will people suddenly stop using their cars and walk or cycle without incentives? What are these incentives?
- The improved bus services are acknowledged to be precarious and likely to be stopped once developer contributions run out. What mitigation actions are Charnwood Borough Council planning to take to ensure the services do not stop (essential if everyone has got rid of their cars!).
- The Transport strategy contains no proposals for how the Local Road Network (LRN) will cope with increased volumes as a result of development.
- Specifically for Anstey the approach appears to be based on the statement in para 5.2 of Exam 56a that “a masterplan to be agreed which includes delivery and phasing arrangements for the whole allocation, in order to achieve comprehensive development that is also integrated with the delivery of necessary infrastructure across the development as a whole, and so that the timing of the delivery of the new primary school, its location, and transport links to it reduce highway impacts and maximise the ability to use sustainable travel options;
- It is a massive leap of faith to accept that such a masterplan will deliver the necessary improvements to mitigate any development. There is no detail as to how such a masterplan will be developed, by who and by when.

It is for the above reasons that the plan in its current form is not sound, due to the lack of sufficient detail on the local road network around Anstey.

Kind Regards

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Anstey Parish Council