



Leeds Civic Trust

COMMENTS ON DRAFT CONNECTING LEEDS TRANSPORT STRATEGY (March 2021)

Appendix

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL MEASURES FOR INCLUSION IN THE STRATEGY

Below we have identified a number of potential measures which we suggest should be considered for inclusion in the Strategy.

1) **Bus Corridors:**

The Connecting Leeds work which proposes looking at key bus routes on a corridor basis and reviewing how the available space on the corridor could be used better seems to us to be a good approach. This should give priority for buses/MRT where appropriate but also balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, taking into account the nature of the road.

An objective would be to complete a review and where appropriate a re-engineering of historic corridors by 2030.

2) **Mass Rapid Transit:**

Although the provision of a MRT network would be an important way of encouraging people to use public transport, there is little on this in the Leeds Strategy (although it is an important component of the WYCA Connectivity Infrastructure Plan). It seems to us that the greatest potential for MRT in West Yorkshire is on the high-density population routes into Leeds and, as a result, there is a need to move this forward much more rapidly in Leeds.

We suggest an objective could be to have a first line in service in 2025, an initial network by 2030 and a full network by 2038.

3) **Park & Ride:**

As public transport options increase, park and ride becomes necessary only to cater for those who need to drive to the city centre, since their existence may encourage people to drive further to access them instead of using public transport from closer to home. Whilst using public transport all the way to the destination would be preferable, pragmatically we accept that using P&R is better than driving right into the city. We would suggest that future facilities would be better located on the other side of the Outer Ring Road or by the M62/M1 and that it may be preferable to provide a larger number of smaller facilities to encourage bus use all around the city.

A potential objective might be to provide P&R on all key routes on the edge of the city including by motorway junctions and the Outer Ring Road by 2030. Also, to identify sites where there might be demand for 'micro' park & ride sites at transport hubs.

4) **Roads:**

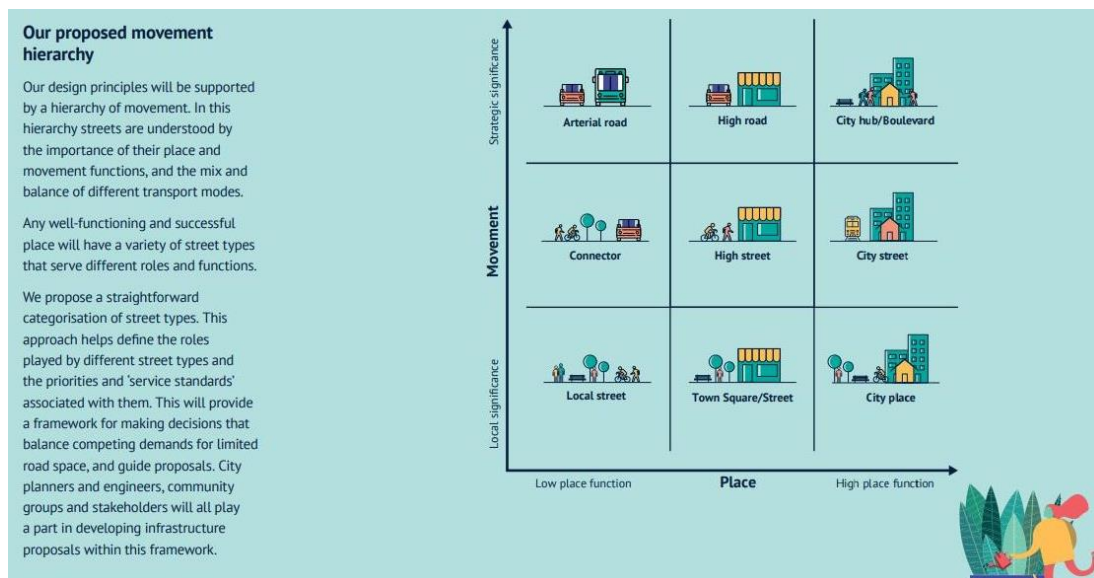
There is virtually no mention of roads in the Strategy and no indication of what the Leeds road network should look like in say 2040 - however, it still envisages 41% of trips in 2030 being made by car. This percentage will be higher by distance travelled and commercial vehicles are in

addition to this. The Trust’s Transport Vision includes the notion of the ‘right tool for the job’ as we accept there will be circumstances where cars (most likely electric) will remain the most practical means of transport (for example for complex journeys or for those with disabilities). However, we need to work to reduce the use of vehicles and to provide better alternatives, thus increasing the number of situations where people will opt for more sustainable modes.

New road developments will be exceptional and would only be those that reduce net road-space overall by re-providing more appropriate road space on key routes but releasing more space on existing routes for the sole use of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. ELOR can only be considered acceptable if more space is taken away from vehicles on the current ring road, with this larger area of existing carriageway reallocated for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and an enhanced public realm. A ring road is far preferable to traffic going through the city centre.

New roads should also only be considered where they deliver a total saving on the carbon budget and bring enhanced amenity and environmental benefits - the carbon assessment should include that involved in construction, maintenance and long-term use by vehicles.

We suggest that the hierarchical model relating movement of place given in the WYCA connectivity strategy could usefully be applied in Leeds.



Speed limits on roads in Leeds often seem quite arbitrary and could be linked with this model to make them more understandable and remove the incentive to use inappropriate roads (‘rat running’):

- Urban Motorway or Outer Ring Road: 50 mph
- Key Route Network or Arterial Road: Rural 50 mph Urban/High Road 40 mph
- Connector: Normal 30 mph High Street 20 mph
- Local Residential Street: 20 mph

This model could also be linked to how different modes of transport are prioritised and potentially road charging.

5) Road Charging:

We suggest LCC and WYCA should lobby national government to introduce a mechanism for road charging based upon using a “black box” communicating with satellites (a similar



technology to that proposed for speed regulation - see section 8) which would enable charging by distance travelled according to specific road and time of day and potentially type of vehicle, as a replacement for the fuel duty revenue stream that will be lost with the introduction of electric cars. Although there may be a national charge, local authorities should be able to levy supplementary charges to subsidise public transport. This could raise significant funds and enable charges to be tailored to avoid perverse incentives and/or unintended consequences.

We suggest that an objective would be to support a campaign to introduce such a road charging scheme.

6) Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

We supported the introduction of the CAZ in Leeds as proposed and which would have applied to HGVs, buses / coaches and taxis (but not private cars). Although this was abandoned as air pollution levels had reduced to be within legal limits, we question whether that situation will be maintained as traffic levels rise again post-Covid. We also note that other cities (e.g. Manchester and Bradford) are going ahead with similar schemes. Therefore, we would like to see the scheme that was proposed for Leeds implemented.

Regarding the potential of a wider ULEZ scheme which would include cars, such an approach has been adopted in cities such as London where there is high quality public transport available for a wide variety of journeys. The arguments against such a policy for Leeds are likely to include discrimination against less affluent households which may have older vehicles and the loss of shoppers/workers to surrounding towns (e.g. Harrogate from North Leeds) where such charges do not apply.

These concerns were used to lobby against introduction of a Workplace Parking Levy in Nottingham (we support such a scheme for Leeds in our main submission) but were proven not to be an issue. A scrappage scheme where it is possible to obtain travel vouchers in exchange for taking a vehicle off the road could be introduced to compensate. In Coventry, eligible motorists (owners of diesel cars built before 2016 and petrol models built before 2006) can receive between £1,500 and £3,000 in the form of a preloaded payment card for use on any public transport (including the city's e-scooters). After this two year trial period in the West Midlands, successful results may then see it rolled-out across the country.

We suggest there needs to be radical action although this is bound to affect some individual choices.

An objective should see the development of a comprehensive route-map which would see the introduction of appropriate controls on polluting vehicles within the urban areas by 2025.

7) Peak Time Motorway Speed Limit:

We suggest that LCC (and WYCA) lobby Highways England to introduce a 50 mph speed limit on the Smart motorways (M1 and M62) in West Yorkshire during the peak time. This also would reduce the incentive for people to travel by car to P&Rs instead of using public transport (bus, train or MRT) from nearer to home. It would also reduce pollution and improve safety given the recent controversy about Smart motorways. The precedent has been set by a 60mph limit on the M1 near Sheffield.

This would be low cost and could be done straightaway.



8) **Speed Limit Enforcement:**

The EU is requiring car manufacturers to fit speed regulators on new cars from 2022. Although the UK has left the EU, we understand that this will also apply in the UK. How will this impact on speed enforcement measures needed in the city in the future? Will this lead to an improvement in road safety whilst reducing the need for traffic calming measures? Whilst speed cameras are in place at particular points on the road network (supplemented by mobile units), other locations in the UK (e.g. City of Nottingham) have deployed 'average speed' cameras. We suggest that the latter have advantages in certain situations. Better enforcement of speed limits has an impact on toxic pollution and carbon emissions, as well as road safety.

An objective could be to introduce average speed cameras as part of a strategy to reduce speeds throughout the urban road system.

9) **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods:**

We would support a significant expansion in the number of these neighbourhoods during the lifetime of the strategy.

10) **Travel to School:**

The difference in traffic levels when the schools are on holiday has been seen as an indication of the fact that the 'school run' is a major contributor to overall congestion. However, it can also be argued that during such periods, parents are also at home and so limiting their journeys. Given that national policies on parental choice and academies have limited the capacity for local authorities to plan for children going to their 'nearest' school, the key strategy should be to encourage more children to use active travel modes to go to/from school. This could include the widespread introduction of 'walking buses' for younger children, safe cycling routes for all children and a network of school buses for older pupils.

An objective would be to set a challenging target for the percentage of pupils who walk, cycle or use public transport to school.

11) **Car Parking:**

A lot of space on roads around the city is taken up by parked cars and this problem seems to be increasing. This causes congestion, increases pollution as vehicles have to brake to pass them, slows buses, is bad for cyclists and increases the feel of car dominance by cluttering the public realm. We suggest the principle be adopted that parking on the highway should be regarded as a privilege not a right.

- Some cities in the UK (e.g. London and Birmingham) have introduced "red routes" on key highways which forbid stopping or parking at peak times - we suggest Leeds could adopt this approach on the key route network.
- In addition, we suggest there should be parking restrictions on all roads with a 5 minutes or greater bus service frequency, such that parking would only be allowed in designated areas for restricted time periods or be for residents with parking permits.
- City centre living should not require the provision of significant car parking, given the proximity to the railway station and bus provision being at its most extensive. As a corollary to a Workplace Parking Levy, we would advocate a root and branch review of minimum parking provision for future residential developments to minimise provision.



An objective should be to deliver the above low-cost measures which are within LCC's remit by 2022, providing immediate benefits for active travel and public transport.

12) Electric Charging Points:

We are aware that the City Council has been proactive in seeking to increase the provision of electric charging points for cars. We suggest that this be taken further by LCC providing leadership for the development of a comprehensive network of electric vehicle charging points across Leeds.

An objective could propose the provision of a comprehensive network of electric vehicle charging points by 2030.

13) Car Clubs and Cycle Hire Schemes

For those occasions when a motor vehicle is particularly useful, there should be a policy to see the introduction of a comprehensive network of car club locations around the city - if these are to be truly practical, these need to be within walking distance of potential users' homes. Car clubs also give users the option of selecting the 'right vehicle for the job' such as a small car for a short trip to travel to a location which can't be reached by public transport, a larger car for a weekend away with the family and a van to carry material from a DIY store.

For business users who perhaps need to carry tools or visit a number of sites over a short period, public and commercial organisations should be encouraged to introduce pool cars available to those who have travelled to their normal place of work by public or active transport. Such an initiative could be linked to the introduction of a Workplace Parking Levy.

It is essential that a cycle hire scheme should be introduced in Leeds as soon as possible - this should be a docked system to control the locations where cycles can be left.

There should be objectives to see the introduction of a comprehensive network of car and cycle hire schemes in the city by 2025.