

LTP4 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA), ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

It is necessary to produce a statement which reports how the findings of the SEA and how the consultation results have been taken into account (a SEA Environmental Statement). This Statement covers:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the LTP;
- How the Environmental Report, the opinions and consultation responses have been taken into account;
- The reasons for choosing the LTP chosen route as adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementation of the LTP.

How Environmental Considerations Have Been Integrated Into The LTP

It should be noted that it has been difficult to assign significance to the effects due to uncertainty within the LTP, relating largely to the uncertainty around the implementation of the interventions.

SEA assessments were undertaken on:

- the strategic options (Highways, Passenger Transport and Sustainable Transport/Demand Management) and the preferred Blended approach;
- the 8 key multimodal key movement corridors that will focus the delivery of the Blended approach;
- the 17 reviewed and strengthened LTP4 transport policies;
- interventions/scheme types;
- the proposed major projects.

As a result of these assessments Table 1 shows the changes to the Transport Vision/LTP4, that were prompted by the SEA.

Table 1: Changes to the LTP4 as a result of the SEA

| SEA Assessment Area | Changes to the LTP4 as a result of the SEA |
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| Strategic Options/ Policies | A number of the assessments have highlighted that rural and semi-rural areas could suffer negative impacts due to the lack of any specific rural policy, it is proposed that a new LTP4 Rural Strategy will be developed (the omission of rural areas was also picked up through the public consultation). |
| Strategic Options/Policies/ Interventions/ Major Projects | Potential negative impacts on local air quality, is a recurring theme throughout the assessments. As a result of the SEA recommendations, along with consultation comments and an increasing national priority around air quality, it has been decided to produce a County Council Countywide Air Quality Strategy. |

| SEA Assessment Area | Changes to the LTP4 as a result of the SEA |
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| Policy 18 – Transport Safety & Security | With the LTP4 proposing more travel by sustainable modes, this will mean more people using the public realm which could pose an increased risk for Hate Crime incidents. The SEA assessment recommended that although this policy acknowledges personal security, it should have specific references to Hate Crime. The explanatory text that accompanies the Policy statement now includes reference to Hate Crime and that the HCC will work with partners to support the delivery of the Hertfordshire Hate Crime Strategy. |
| Strategic Options/ Policies/ Interventions/ Corridors | Another common theme/recommendation in the SEA of LTP4 is various electric vehicle issues (safety, charging infrastructure, electricity supply etc.), therefore it has been decided as a result of the SEA recommendations and consultation comments that an Electric Vehicle technical document will be developed that will consider the issues, a full LTP4 EV Strategy may be required at a future date. |
| Policy 9 - Buses | The assessment of this policy (and a number of the other assessments) has highlighted that the LTP4 doesn't promote the use of cleaner technology in buses (i.e. latest Euro ratings or retrofitting). Policy 9 now includes a new policy statement (h) which encourages better emission standards for buses. |
| Policy 5 – Development Management | The assessment of this policy recommended that the policy statement (g) wording could be stronger around providing electric vehicle infrastructure at new developments. Instead of saying 'where practical' the policy statement was strengthened to say 'Ensure'. |
| Network Management & Freight Policy | The SEA assessment of the Network Management & Freight Policy (and other freight issues highlighted by other assessments), also contributed to the decision to split this policy and create a separate 'Freight & Logistics' Policy 16. |

The SEA assessments have also recommended a number of changes to internal processes, and include:

- It is difficult to say at a countywide LTP level the impacts on the historic environment, the SEA recommends that information on the local historic environment is collected for any evidence bases for schemes and packages, and that the HCC map of historic assets is made widely available to all staff involved with scheme design/development, along with Historic England guidance for engineers and designers (Streets for all – East of England, and Advice for Highway Engineers & Designers. Environmental Impact Assessments will also consider impacts on the Historic Environment in more detail for any major projects.
- Make widely available to all staff involved with scheme design/development HCC Flood maps, and that advice should be sought from the HCC Flood Risk

- Management Team and where relevant the Environment Agency for areas of known flooding so as to protect local water resources;
- That a 'light touch' Environmental Impact Assessment/checklist is developed with Highways colleagues, for smaller scale schemes that are not subject to a full EIA, that can pick up environmental, and socio-economic issues;
 - That Archaeological colleagues are consulted for any scheme/strategy development;
 - That all transport related consultations are sent to district/borough air quality officers;
 - That Highways processes/policy around the use of recycled/recycling aggregate, and waste disposal are checked to ensure that the optimum is being achieved;
 - That all LTP4 supporting documents are screened to see if they require their own SEA assessment;
 - That the findings from the SEA are considered by any LTP4 supporting documents that are reviewed or created;
 - The need for further HRA screening/assessments for Growth & Travel Plans and other strategies (i.e. A414 Strategy);
 - That separate Health Impact Assessments are undertaken, particularly for major projects and Growth and Transport Plans. It is now Corporate Policy that all plans/strategies have a HIA.

How Consultation Findings Have Been Taken Into Account

There have been 4 rounds of SEA consultation on the developing Transport Vision 2050 and LTP4: SEA Scoping Report, Strategic Options/Alternatives, proposed new LTP4 Policy/Major Projects, and the draft LTP4. The majority of the SEA consultation comments have been around the SEA Environmental Report, rather than the LTP4 content. Table 2 summarises how the consultation findings have been taken on board. No significant changes were made to either document as a result of consultation.

Table 2: How Consultation Findings Have Been Taken Into Account

| Summary of Comments | How the comments were taken on board |
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| A number of European, National and Local level transport related Plans, Programmes and Policies were missing from Section 4.2 of the SEA Environmental Report. | The suggestions were added to Table 4.1 and Appendix 2 in the Environmental Report. |
| Historic England requested that all references to 'Cultural Heritage' in the SEA Environmental Report be amended to 'Historic Environment', a wider heading that encompasses all aspects of heritage. | All references were amended. |
| Historic England suggested that the SEA Objective 'To protect the cultural heritage of Hertfordshire' be amended, so that it is clearer and outlines the protection of all aspects. | The SEA Objective was amended to read 'To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings'. |

| Summary of Comments | How the comments were taken on board |
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| <p>Historic England requested that specific historic environmental data be included in the SEA baseline data.</p> | <p>The following indicators were added to Appendix 3: SEA baseline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of listed buildings - Number of scheduled monuments - Number of registered parks and gardens - Number of conservation areas and % of local area authority covered by designation - Number of locally listed heritage assets - Neighbourhood Plans in Hertfordshire |
| <p>Historic England recommended that further information be added to the SEA Baseline on the locations and numbers of listing buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas etc.</p> | <p>Maps showing listed buildings, scheduled monuments and registered parks and gardens were added to Appendix 3: Environmental Baseline Data.</p> |
| <p>Historic England suggested that designated and non-designated heritage assets, and the 'setting' of historic assets form part of the SEA Baseline.</p> | <p>This was added to Appendix 3 of the SEA Environmental Report.</p> |
| <p>Historic England encouraged HCC to work with local conservation and archaeological officers in the preparation of the SEA and LTP4.</p> | <p>Internal conservation and archaeological officers were consulted upon, and will be consulted on any future transport related consultations, in particular in the development of LTP4 Supporting Documents and Growth & Transport Plans.</p> |
| <p>Historic England pointed out that although the SEA shows benefits for the historic environment, they highlighted that there is the potential for some very site specific negative impacts.</p> | <p>Where impacts have been noted around the historic environment in the LTP4 SEA assessments, additions have been made that there could be site specific impacts depending on the individual schemes proposed.</p> |
| <p>Natural England suggested that the baseline should distinguish the difference between 'statutory' and 'non-statutory' protected biodiversity sites.</p> | <p>This was added to Appendix 3: Baseline.</p> |

| Summary of Comments | How the comments were taken on board |
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| Natural England pointed out that there was no SEA Objective for the impacts on soil. | An SEA objective was added, with supporting sub-objectives for impacts on the soil environment. |
| Natural England suggested that the outcomes of the LTP4 Habitats Regulation Assessment should be added to the relevant assessments and the Final Environmental Report. | The outcome of the HRA was added to the relevant assessments and is in Section 1.3 Related Processes to SEA in the Environmental Report. |
| Natural England pointed out that the assessments to not distinguish between short, medium and long term effects, or permanent and temporary effects. | The assessments were amended. |
| The County Council's Public Health team recommended that a separate Health Impact Assessment be undertaken on LTP4. | After discussion with Public Health colleagues it was felt that the SEA objectives (2 & 3) were felt to be sufficient and therefore a separate assessment was not undertaken. A variety of health professionals were also consulted. Since the final round of consultation corporate policy has changed and HIAs are now required for any future plans/strategies developed. |
| Historic England provided comments on cumulative considerations of delivering schemes and provided a list of advice publications. | This information will be passed to colleagues preparing new LTP4 supporting strategies. |
| Historic England suggested that existing Conservation Area Appraisals and relevant Neighbourhood Plans be included in Table 4.1 Related Plans, Programmes and Policies. | Neighbourhood Plans have been mapped, but existing Conservation Area Appraisals will take a little more time and research and so will be reported in future LTP4 SEA Monitoring Reports. |

Reasons For Choosing The Plan As Adopted

The Local Transport Plan sets out how transport can help deliver a positive future vision for Hertfordshire, and to achieve this, the LTP aims to deliver 9 objectives, in turn these objectives are translated into policies and schemes. A preferred strategic approach has been developed to achieve this, focussing on 8 strategic movement corridors. The following table details the decisions made during the development of LTP4.

| LTP4 Element | Final Decision |
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| Objectives | <p>A set of proposed transport objectives were developed during Stage 2 of the early Transport Vision work, and were amended as a result of consultation in Autumn 2015, to have a broader focus than economic growth and recognise transport's contribution to other important policy areas. These objectives form the framework of LTP4 and outline the strategy for delivery.</p> <p>An SEA assessment of the 9 LTP4 objectives against the 19 SEA Objectives was undertaken to identify areas of compatibility, incompatibility and whether objectives have a slight positive or negative effect on other objectives. Overall the assessment showed that there would be no significant negative impacts, but the potential for slight negative impacts for objectives 2, 3, 4 and 9 around air quality, climate change, soil, resources and personal safety has been identified, but is dependent on how schemes/ interventions are delivered.</p> |
| Strategic Alternatives | <p>Four differing alternative approaches were considered (1 - Highways, 2 - Public Transport, 3 - Sustainable Transport & Demand Management, and 4 - Blended), and each addressed the 9 objectives in different ways meeting different needs with different environmental impacts and requiring different levels of funding. It was never the intention that any one of the approaches would be adopted on its own but having four alternatives meant they could each be assessed to demonstrate the socio-economic and environmental benefits and dis-benefits.</p> <p>A preferred Blended approach was determined in light of the SEA appraisals, and other factors, including the potential funding levels required and likely to be available and the consideration of public attitudes to transport. The preferred approach therefore combines elements of alternatives 2, and 3 together with limited new infrastructure from alternative 1 but would not rule out other potential elements from 1 and 2 should circumstances warrant it and subject to environmental appraisal and the availability of funding. The preferred approach aims to achieve the efficient management of the existing network, and an increase in the use of sustainable modes.</p> |
| Key Movement Corridors | <p>The Blended approach of improvements in highways, public transport, walking and cycling will focus on 8 key movement corridors that build upon schemes already committed and by other agencies.</p> <p>The SEA assessments only identified one significant negative impact, that the major rail infrastructure improvements proposed for Corridor 4 (London/Harlow/Stansted/Cambs), could have significant</p> |

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| | <p>impacts on the Lea Valley EU Natura Site that is adjacent to the railway line. This is not a HCC led scheme but the SEA recommends that this scheme is subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment to identify specific impacts on this Ramsar site. There are also a number of potential negative impacts common to most of the corridors: potential for hate crime with increased use of sustainable modes, impacts on the historic environment, the need to promote cleaner buses, climate change and flooding, impacts of smaller scale schemes. All of these issues are included in Table 1 of this statement on how the LTP4 has been changed as a result of the SEA.</p> |
| <p>LTP4 Proposed New Policies and Policy Review</p> | <p>The Transport Vision development work outlined 5 new policy proposals that would be required to deliver the new set of LTP objectives (adoption of a Transport User Hierarchy, delivering a step change in cycling in larger urban areas, greater facilitation and support for shared mobility, enhanced public transport connectivity between towns through bus priority measures, a priority traffic management network, and Growth and Transport Plans). These were integrated into the overall policy review which aimed to strengthen the existing policies and consolidate them into a more concise set, reducing duplication and operational detail has been removed.</p> <p>LTP4 contains 23 policies, which have been embedded into the main strategy document to provide clarity on the policy direction and provide a more engaging and accessible LTP. The supporting strategies for LTP then expand on these policies. The SEA assessed 17 initial draft policies, and as a result of consultation and the SEA recommendations 3 policies were split out resulting in the final 23 policies.</p> <p>No significant negative impacts were identified as a result of the SEA assessments, but a number of recommendations will need to be followed up. It is recommended that all LTP4 supporting documents are screened for SEA, in particular the Growth & Transport Plans which are likely to result in cumulative impacts. Larger major projects are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment, but smaller highways projects have an equally damaging impact on the environment due to cumulative impacts, it is recommended that a 'light touch' EIA or checklist is developed for smaller scale transport projects.</p> |
| <p>Major Projects</p> | <p>The County Council has been developing and regularly consulting on a list of proposed LTP4 major schemes since 2015. The list of projects has been informed by a consideration of issues and opportunities on the 8 key multimodal movement corridors, and has to follow DfT processes and Transport Appraisal Guidance (WEBTAG).</p> |

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| | <p>In late 2016, a list of major projects was consulted on and an interim SEA was undertaken on these schemes. Each of these projects had positives and negatives highlighted by the SEA assessment, but any negatives would be considered in more detail and mitigated through a full Environmental Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The final list of major projects that were included in the Autumn 2017 LTP4 public consultation, were subject to a further round of SEA appraisal (as it was felt that this revised list was significantly different to previous lists). The major projects proposed that involve major new infrastructure would have significant negative impacts on the local environment, but major projects are subject to a full EIA which would consider these issues in much more detail than a SEA, and mitigation measures would be identified and implemented. The SEA recommends that if these projects are taken forward then Habitats Regulation Assessments would be needed for those schemes on the eastern side of the county in close vicinity to the EU Natura 2000 sites; that separate health impact assessments would be required; and that the A414 Strategy and Growth & Transport Plans would require their own SEA due to the amount of schemes involved in each.</p> |
| Interventions | <p>At this stage of development of a Local Transport Plan it is impossible to SEA a full list of interventions that will be delivered over the plan period. As complete a list as possible of various intervention types that could deliver the LTP4 objectives and policies was drawn up for assessment, this list is by no means exhaustive in light of future interventions being developed over the life of the plan.</p> <p>Growth and Transport Plans will deliver a significant level of schemes and this SEA has identified that such Transport Plans should be subject to a separate SEA process.</p> |

Supporting Documents

LTP4 is the main strategy document and is accompanied by a suite of supporting documents which focus on specific aspects of service delivery, or on specific locations (i.e. Growth & Transport Plans). Most of the supporting documents will be published by 2019 (some of the Growth & Transport Plans may not be completed until 2020). All supporting documents will be screened individually to identify if they require a separate SEA. SEA Assessments have also highlighted and recommended that Growth & Transport Plans and the A414 Strategy (major project) should be subject to their own SEA and HRA Screening, due to the large number of interventions proposed, which would not be covered by the LTP4 SEA and that cumulative impacts would need to be considered in more detail.

SEA Monitoring

The initial Transport Vision 2050 Scoping Report contained evidence in the Environmental Baseline which helped to identify the main areas that have been recommended for monitoring. Five key areas were identified as needing work on the availability and quality of data, plus the consideration of potential impact of the key areas on the preferred approach, policies and interventions within the Local Transport Plan. These areas are:

- Road Congestion: specifically urban traffic in peak hours, and the rise in car ownership figures;
- Effects on climate change and flooding: the need to limit carbon dioxide emissions and nitrogen dioxide from transport emissions;
- Air pollution: the increasing number of AQMAs;
- Noise pollution;
- Childhood obesity levels.

As a result of consultation the monitoring methods as detailed in the draft SEA Environmental Report remain largely unchanged, but consultation highlighted a number of baseline gaps that needed to be investigated as part of the monitoring process.

Additional Monitoring Identified as a Result of the SEA Assessments

The assessments of the strategic options, policies, major projects and interventions have highlighted a number of issues that will need to be monitored once LTP4 is adopted, these include:

- A cumulative assessment has been undertaken through this SEA process, but delivery of interventions and packages (such as Growth & Transport Plans), particularly if delivered in close proximity, would need to be monitored for cumulative impacts i.e. contributions to air quality, emissions, noise etc.
- With sustainable modes being promoted for LTP4, the SEA recommends that levels of crime on passenger transport is monitored to establish if there is an issue in Hertfordshire, and to ensure that any areas of concern do not worsen.
- The Network Management and Freight Policies support the movement of freight to waterways if the opportunities arise, even though there is limited capacity on the 2 navigable waterways in Hertfordshire. What would be the impact of an increase of freight on these waterways? Therefore it is recommended that this is monitored, and some further research undertaken on the movement of freight on waterways.
- It is acknowledged that autonomous technology will increase in the future, this will be carefully monitored before Hertfordshire County Council commits to any schemes in the county.
- At this stage the number of conservation area appraisals in the county has not been identified, this area of knowledge will be sought with the aim of adding it to the baseline data.
- The SEA has highlighted that communication and consultation with other County Council units/departments needs improving, and that the SEA baseline should be shared for use by other projects i.e. Evidence Packs for Growth & Transport Plans.

SEA Monitoring and Review Timeframes

Monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis and reported with any LTP4 Progress Report, through a SEA Monitoring Report. Wider monitoring of environmental effects by using all of the indicators in the Environmental Baseline will also be considered as part of this process. LTP4 also includes a list of performance indicators for monitoring transportation issues and although there are no requirements to include mandatory indicators in the LTP4 it was decided this was still the best way to monitor the effectiveness of the plan and the indicators were chosen because of their local significance.